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TOLSTOY

AND

HIS PROBLEMS

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ESSAYS

BY

AYLMER MAUDE

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1901

NOTE

Most of the essays here collected have appeared before, and when first published were sent to Count Leo Tolstoy, who on four different occasions wrote expressing his approval of them.

Of the first essay in this book, he wrote:

> *"I very much approve of it. It is admirably constructed, and what is most important is given."*

Of What is Art? An Introduction, *he wrote:*

> *"I have read your Introduction with great pleasure. You have admirably and strongly expressed the fundamental thought of the book."*

Of Tolstoy's Theory of Art, *he wrote:*

> *"Your article . . . pleased me exceedingly, so clearly and strongly is the fundamental thought expressed."*

Of After the Tsar's Coronation (*when published in 1896 as Epilogue to a small book*), *he wrote:*

> *"The Epilogue to Maude's book is excellent . . . firm and radical, going to the last conclusions."*

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PREFACE

It is still difficult for English readers to discover Tolstoy's opinions, or, at any rate, to understand clearly how his views on different subjects fit together. Some of his works have never been translated; others have been translated from sense into nonsense. Even in Russian several of his most important philosophic works are only obtainable in the badly edited Geneva edition which is full of mistakes.

Besides these external difficulties, there are difficulties inherent in the subjects he discusses, nor is it always easy for the reader to understand from which side Tolstoy approaches his subject, and to make due allowance for the "personal equation." So that most readers, however open-minded and willing to understand, on reading books that contain so much that runs counter both to the established beliefs of our day and to the hopes of our various "advanced" groups, must have felt, as I did, a desire to cross-examine Tolstoy personally.

Being the only Englishman who, in recent years, has had the advantage of intimate personal intercourse, continued over a period of some years, with Tolstoy, I hardly need an excuse for trying to share with others some of the results he helped me to reach.

Each essay in this volume expresses, in one form or other, Tolstoy's view of life; and the main object of the book is not to praise his views, but to explain them. His positions, not being final revelations of the truth attainable by man, may

and should be subjected to criticism, and to re-examination from other points of view. But a necessary preliminary to profitable criticism is comprehension; *and this necessary preliminary having, heretofore, in relation to Tolstoy's works, been very frequently neglected, my first aim is clearly and simply to restate certain fundamental principles with which he has dealt. The first five essays do this directly, and the last four indirectly. But Tolstoy must, of course, not be held responsible for my statements on matters of detail or matters of fact, such, for example, as the history of the Doukhobórs or the negotiations that preceded the war in South Africa.*

The article on the Doukhobórs appears now for the first time in print, after having been given several times in the form of a lecture. "Talks with Tolstoy" has been re-shaped, and the other essays have been more or less revised, since they first appeared.

My thanks are due to those concerned, for kind permission to republish articles which originally appeared in "The New Century Review," "The Contemporary Review," "The Bookman" (New York), "The New Age" and "The New Order"; as well as to my friend Herbert P. Archer, for helping me to prepare this edition.

The publication of the present volume will not prevent separate essays contained in it from circulating in cheap form.

AYLMER MAUDE.

Great Baddow,
Chelmsford.

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LEO TOLSTOY

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY was born 28th August 1828, at a house in the country not many miles from Túla, and about 130 miles south of Moscow.

He has lived most of his life in the country, preferring it to town, and believing that people would be healthier and happier if they lived more natural lives, in touch with nature, instead of crowding together in cities.

He lost his mother when he was three, and his father when he was nine years old. He remembers a boy visiting his brothers and himself when he was twelve years old, and bringing the news that they had found out at school that there was no God, and that all that was taught about God was a mere invention.

He himself went to school in Moscow, and before he was grown up, he had imbibed the opinion, generally current among educated Russians, that "religion" is old-fashioned and superstitious, and that sensible and cultured people do not require it for themselves.

After finishing school Tolstoy went to the University at Kazán. There he studied Oriental languages, but he did not pass the final examinations.

In one of his books Tolstoy remarks how often the cleverest boy is at the bottom of the class.

And this really does occur. A boy of active, independent mind who has his own problems to think out, will often find it terribly hard to keep his attention on the lessons the master wants him to learn. But I do not know to what extent his remark refers to his own experience.

He entered the army and was first stationed in the Caucasus, where he was with an elder brother to whom he was greatly attached.

When the Crimean War began, in 1854, Tolstoy applied for active service, and was transferred to an artillery regiment engaged in the defence of Sevastopol. Here he obtained that first-hand knowledge of war which has helped him to speak on the subject with conviction. He saw war as it really is.

The men who governed Russia, France, England, Sardinia, and Turkey, had quarrelled about the custody of the "Holy Places" in Palestine, and about two lines in a treaty made in 1774 between Russia and Turkey.

They stopped at home, but sent other people—most of them poorly paid, simple people, who knew nothing about the quarrel — to kill each other wholesale in order to settle it.

Working-men were taken from Lancashire, Yorkshire, Middlesex, Essex, and all parts of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France, and Sardinia, and shipped, thousands of miles, to join a number of poor Turkish peasants in trying to kill Russian peasants. These latter had in most cases been forced, unwillingly, to leave their homes

and families, and to march on foot thousands of miles to fight these people they never saw before, and against whom they bore no grudge.

Some excuse had, of course, to be made for all this, and, in England, people were told the war was "in defence of oppressed nationalities."

When some 50,000 men had been killed, and about £340,000,000 had been spent, those who governed said it was time to stop. They forgot all about the "oppressed nationalities," but bargained about the number and kind of ships Russia might have on the Black Sea.

Fifteen years later, when France and Germany were fighting each other, the Russian Government tore up that treaty, and the other Governments then said it did not matter. Later still, Lord Salisbury said that in the Crimean War we "put our money on the wrong horse." To have said so at the time the people were killing each other would have been unpatriotic. In all countries truth, on such matters, spoken before it is stale —is unpatriotic.

When the war was over, Count Tolstoy left the army and settled in Petersburg. He was welcome to whatever advantages the society of the capital had to offer, for not only was he a nobleman and an officer, just back from the heroic defence of Sevastopol, but he was then already famous as a brilliant writer. He had written short stories since he was twenty-three, and while still young was recognised among Russia's foremost literary men.

He had, therefore, fame, applause and wealth—and at first he found these things very pleasant. But being a man of unusually sincere nature, he began in the second, and still more in the third, year of this kind of life, to ask himself seriously, why people made such a fuss about the stories, novels, or poems, that he and other literary men were producing. If, said he, our work is really so valuable that it is worth what is paid for it, and worth all this praise and applause—it must be that we are saying something of great importance to the world to know. What, then, is our message? What have we to teach?

But the more he considered the matter, the more evident it was to him that the authors and artists did not themselves know what they wanted to teach,—in fact, that they had nothing of real importance to say, and often relied upon their powers of expression, when they had nothing to express. What one said, another contradicted, and what one praised—another jeered at.

When he examined their lives, he saw that so far from being exceptionally moral and self-denying, they were a more selfish and immoral set of men even than the officers he had been among in the army.

In later years, when he had quite altered his views of life, he wrote with very great severity of the life he led when in the army and in Petersburg. This is the passage,—it occurs in *My Confession*: "I cannot now think of those years without horror, loathing, and heart-ache. I killed

men in war, and challenged men to duels in order to kill them; I lost at cards, consumed what the peasants produced, sentenced them to punishments, lived loosely, and deceived people. Lying, robbery, adultery of all kinds, drunkenness, violence, murder . . . there was no crime that I did not commit, and people approved of my conduct, and my contemporaries considered, and consider me, to be comparatively speaking a moral man."

Many people — forgetting Tolstoy's strenuous manner of writing, and the mood in which *My Confession* was written—have concluded from these lines that, as a young man, he led a particularly immoral life. Really, he is selecting the worst incidents, and is calling them by their harshest names; "war" and the "profits from his estate" are "murder" and "robbery." In this passage he is — like John Bunyan and other good men before him — denouncing rather than describing the life he lived as a young man. The simple fact is that he lived among an immoral, upper-class city society, and to some extent yielded to the example of those around him; but he did so with qualms of conscience and frequent strivings after better things. Judged even as harshly as he judges himself, the fact remains that those among whom he lived considered him to be above their average moral level.

Dissatisfied with his life, sceptical of the utility of his work as a writer, convinced that he could not teach others without first knowing what he had to teach, Tolstoy left Petersburg and retired

to an estate in the country, near the place where he was born, and where he still spends most of each year.

It was the time of the great emancipation movement in Russia. Tolstoy did not wait for the decree of emancipation, but voluntarily freed his serfs. His wife told me that he was the first Russian nobleman to do so.

In the country Tolstoy attended to his estates and organised schools for the peasants. If he did not know enough to teach the "cultured crowd" in Petersburg — perhaps he could teach peasant children. Eventually he came to see that before you can know what to teach—even to a peasant child — you must know the purpose of human life. Otherwise you may help him to "get on," and he may "get on to other people's backs," and there be a nuisance even to himself.

Tolstoy twice travelled abroad, visiting Germany, France, and England, and studying the educational systems, which seemed to him very bad. Children born with different tastes and capacities are put through the same course of lessons, just as coffee beans of different sizes are ground to the same grade. And this is done, not because it is best for them, but because it is easiest for the teachers, and because the parents lead artificial lives, and neglect their own children.

In spite of his dissatisfaction with literary work Tolstoy continued to write—but he wrote differently. Habits are apt to follow from afar. A man's conduct may be influenced by new thoughts

and feelings, but his future conduct will be a resultant both of what he was, and of what he wishes to become. So a billiard ball driven by a cue and meeting another ball in motion, takes a new line, due partly to the push from the cue, and partly to the impact of the other ball.

At this period of his life, perplexed by problems that he was not yet able to solve, Tolstoy, who in general even up to his old age has possessed remarkable strength and endurance of body as well as of mind, was threatened with a breakdown in health—a nervous prostration. He had to leave all his work and go for a time to a Sanatorium in Eastern Russia, there to drink a preparation of mare's milk and to lead a merely animal existence.

In 1862 Tolstoy married, and he and his wife have lived to see the century out, a faithful and loving couple. Not even the fact that the Countess did not agree with many of the views her husband has expressed during the last twenty years, and has been dissatisfied at his readiness to part with his property, to associate with "dirty" low-class people, and to refuse payment for his literary work—not even these difficulties have diminished their affection for one another. Thirteen children were born to them, of whom five died young.

The fact that twenty years of such a married life preceded Tolstoy's change of views, and that the opinions he now expresses were formed when he was still as active and vigorous as most men

are at half his age, should be a sufficient answer to those who have so misunderstood him as to suggest that, having worn himself out by a life of vice, he now cries "sour grapes" lest others should enjoy pleasures he is obliged to abandon.

For some time Tolstoy was active as a "Mediator of the Peace," adjusting difficulties between the newly emancipated serfs and their former owners. During the eighteen years that followed his marriage he also wrote the long novels, *War and Peace*, and *Anna Karénina*. His wife copied out *War and Peace* no less than seven times, as he altered and improved it again and again. With his work, as with his life, Tolstoy is never satisfied—he always wants to get a step nearer to perfection, and is keen to note and to admit his deficiencies.

The happiness and fulness of activity of his family life kept the great problems that had begun to trouble him in the background for nearly fifteen years. But ultimately the great question: *What is the meaning of my life?* presented itself more clearly and insistently than ever—and he began to feel that unless he could answer it he could not live.

Was wealth the aim of his life?

He was highly paid for his books, and he had 20,000 acres of land in the Government of Samára; but suppose he became twice or ten times as rich, he asked himself, would it satisfy him? And if it satisfied him—was not death coming: to take it all away? The more satisfying the wealth,

the more terrible must death be—which would deprive him of it all.

Would family happiness—the love of wife and children—satisfy him, and explain the purpose of life? There again stood death—threatening not only him, but all those he loved. How terrible that they, and he, must die and part!

How many fond mothers stake their happiness on the well-being of an only child, and make that the aim of their lives. And how unfortunate such women are! If the child is ill, or if it is out too late, how wretched they make themselves and others. Certainly the love of family affords no sufficient answer to the problem—What am I here for?

There was fame! He was making a world-wide literary reputation which would not be destroyed by his death. He asked himself whether, if he became more famous than Shakespear or Molière, that would satisfy him? He felt that it would not. An author's works outlive him, but they too will perish. How many authors are read 1000 years after their death? Is not even the language we write in constantly altering and becoming archaic? Besides, what is the use of fame when I am no longer here to enjoy it? Fame will not supply an explanation of life.

And as he thought more and more about the meaning of life, and failed to find the key to the puzzle, it seemed to him—as it seemed to Solomon, Schopenhauer, and to Buddha when he first faced the problems of poverty, sickness, and death—that

life is an evil: a thing we must wish to be rid of. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." "Which of us has his desire, or having it is happy?"

Is not the whole thing a gigantic and cruel joke played upon us by some demoniac power—as we may play with an ant, defeating all its aims and destroying all it builds? And is not suicide the only way of escape?

But though, for a time, he felt strongly drawn towards suicide, he found that he went on living, and he decided to ask those considered most capable of teaching what their explanation of the purpose of life was.

So he went to the scientists: the people who studied nature and dealt with what they called "facts" and "realities," and he asked them. But they had nothing to give him except their latest theory of self-acting evolution. Millions of years ago certain unchanging forces were acting on certain immutable atoms, and a process of evolution was going on, and it has gone on ever since. The sun was evolved, and our world. Eventually plant life, then animal life, were evolved. The antediluvian animals were evolved, and when nature had done with them it wiped them out and produced us, and evolution is still going on, and the sun is cooling down, and ultimately our race will perish like the antediluvian animals.

It is very ingenious. It seems nearer the truth than the guess, attributed to Moses, that everything was made in six days. But it does not answer the question that troubled Tolstoy, and

the reply to it is obvious. If this self-acting process of evolution is going on—let it evolute! It will wipe me out whether I try to help it or to hinder it, and not me only, but all my friends, and my race, and the solar system to which I belong.

The vital question to Tolstoy was: "What am I here for?" And the question to which the scientists offered a partial reply was, "How did I get here?"—which is quite a different matter.

Tolstoy turned to the priests: the people whose special business it is to guide men's conduct and to tell them what they should, and what they should not, believe.

But the priests satisfied him as little as the scientists. For the problem that troubled him was a real problem needing all man's powers of mind to answer it; but the priests having, so to say, signed their thirty-nine articles, were not free to consider it with open minds. They would only think about the problems of life and death subject to the proviso that they should not have to budge from those points to which they were nailed down in advance. And it is no more possible to think efficiently in that way than it is to run well with your legs tied together.

The scientists put the wrong question, the priests accepted the real question—but were not free to seek the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Moreover, the greatest and most obvious evil Tolstoy had seen in his life, was that pre-arranged,

systematic, and wholesale method of murder, called war. And he saw that the priests, with very few exceptions, not only did nothing to prevent such wholesale murder, but they even went, as chaplains, with the soldiers, to teach them Christianity without telling them it was wrong to fight; and they blessed ships of war, and prayed God to scatter our enemies, to confound their politics and to frustrate their knavish tricks. They would even say this kind of thing without knowing who the "enemies" were. So long as they are not *we*—they must be bad and deserve to be "confounded."

Nor was this all. Professing a religion of love, they harassed and persecuted those who professed any other forms of religious belief. In the way the different churches condemned each other, and struggled one against another, there was much that shocked him. Tolstoy tried hard to make himself think as the priests thought—but he was unable to do so.

Then he thought that perhaps, if people could not tell him in words what the object of life is—he might find it out by watching their actions. And first he began to consider the lives of those of his own society—people of the middle and upper classes. He noticed among them people of different types.

First, there were those who led an animal life. Many of these were women, or healthy, young men, full of physical life. The problem that troubled him no more troubled them than it

troubles the ox or the ass. They evidently had not yet come to the stage of development to which life, thought, and experience, had brought him, but he could not turn back and live as they lived.

Next came those who, though capable of thinking of serious things, were so occupied with their business, professional, literary, or governmental work —that they had no time to think about fundamental problems. One had his newspaper to get out each morning by seven o'clock. Another had his diplomatic negotiations to pursue. A third was projecting a railway. They could not "stop and think." They were so busy getting a living that they never asked *why* they lived?

Another large set of people, some of them thoughtful and conscientious people — were hypnotised by authority. Instead of thinking with their own heads, and asking themselves the purpose of life, they accepted an answer given them by someone else; by some Church, or Pope, or book, or newspaper, or Emperor, or Minister. Many people are hypnotised by one or other of the Churches, and still more are hypnotised by patriotism and loyalty to *their own* country and *their own* rulers. In all nations—Russia, England, France, Germany, America, China and everywhere else—people who know that it is not good to boast about their own qualities or to extol their own families, may be found who consider it a virtue to pretend that *their* nation is better than all other nations, and that *their* rulers when they quarrel

and fight with other rulers are always in the right. People hypnotised in this way cease to think seriously about right or wrong, and, where their patriotism is concerned, they are ready to accept the authority of someone who to them typifies their Church or their country. However absurd such a state of mind may be, it keeps many people absorbed and occupied. How many people in France eagerly asserted the guilt of Dreyfus on the authority of General Mercier, and how many people in England were ready to fight and die rather than to agree to arbitration with the Transvaal after Chamberlain told them that arbitration was out of the question!

There were a fourth set of people, who seemed to Tolstoy the most contemptible of all. These were the "epicureans": people who saw the emptiness and purposelessness of their lives, but said, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Belonging to the well-to-do classes and being materially better off than common people, they relied on this advantage, and tried to snatch as much pleasure from life as they could.

None of these people could show Tolstoy the purpose of his life. He began to despair, and was more and more inclined to think suicide the best course open to a brave and sincere man.

But there were the peasants, for whom he had always felt great sympathy, and who lived all around him. How was it that they—poor, ignorant, heavily-taxed, compelled to serve in the army, and obliged to produce food, clothing and

houses, not only for themselves, but for all their superiors—how was it that they, on the whole, seemed to know the meaning of life. They did not commit suicide, but bore their hard lot patiently, and when death came — met it with tranquillity. The more he thought about it, the more he saw that these country peasants, tilling the soil and producing those necessaries of life without which we should all starve, were living a comparatively good and natural life, doing what was obviously useful, and that they were nearer to a true understanding of life than the priests or the scribes. And he talked of these things with some of the best of these men, and found that, even if many of them could not express themselves clearly in words, they had firm ground under their feet. Some of them, too, were remarkably clear in thought and speech, free from superstition, and able to go to the roots of the matter. But to break free from the superstitions of science, and the prejudices of the "cultured crowd" to which he belonged, was no easy matter even for Tolstoy, nor was it quickly accomplished.

When the peasants spoke to him of "serving God" and "not living for oneself," it perplexed him. What is this "God"? How can I know whether he, or it, really exists? But the question —"What is the meaning of my life?" demanded an answer, and the peasants, by example as well as by words, helped him towards that answer.

He studied the sacred books of the East: the

scriptures of the Chinese, of the Buddhists, and of the Mahommedans—but it was in the Gospels, to which the peasants referred him, that he found the meaning and purpose of life best and most clearly expressed. The fundamental truths concerning life and death, and our relation to the unseen, are the same in all the great religious books of the East or of the West—but, for himself at least, Tolstoy found in the Gospels (though they contain many blunders, perversions and superstitions) the best, most helpful, and clearest expression of those truths.

He had always admired many passages in the Gospels, but had found much that perplexed him. He now re-read them in the following way: the only way, he says, in which any books can be profitably studied.

He first read them carefully through to see what they contained that was perfectly clear and simple, and that quite agreed with his own experience of life, and accorded with his reason and conscience. Having found (and even marked in the margin with blue pencil) this *core* that had been expressed so plainly and strongly that it was easy to grasp—he read the four little books again several times over, and found that much that at first seemed obscure or perplexing, was quite reasonable and helpful when read by the light of what he had already seen to be the main message of the books. Much still remained unintelligible, and therefore of no use to him. This must be so in books dealing with great questions, that were

written down long ago, in languages not ours, by people not highly educated, and who were superstitious.

For instance, if one reads that Jesus walked on the water, that Mahommed's coffin hung between heaven and earth, or that a star entered the side of Buddha's mother before he was born, one may wonder how the statement got into the book, and be perplexed and baffled by it rather than helped; but it need not hinder the effect of what one has understood and recognised as true.

Reading the Gospels in this way, Tolstoy reached a view of life that answered his question, and that has enabled him to walk surefootedly, knowing the aim and purpose of his life, and ready to meet death calmly when it comes.

Each one of us has a reason and a conscience that come to us from somewhere: we did not make them ourselves. They oblige us to differentiate between good and evil; we *must* approve of some things and disapprove of others. We are all alike in this respect—all members of one family, and in this way sons of one Father. In each of us, dormant or active, there is a higher and better nature, a spiritual nature, a "spark of the divine." If we open our hearts and mind we can discern good from evil in relation to our own conduct: the law is "very near unto you, in your heart and in your mouth." The purpose of our life on earth should be to serve, not our lower, animal nature—but to serve the power to which our higher nature recognises its kinship. Jesus

boldly identifies himself with his higher nature, speaks of himself, and of us, as Sons of the Father, and bids us be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.

This then is the answer to the question: What is the meaning and purpose of my life? There is a Power enabling me to discern what is good, and I am in touch with that Power; my reason and conscience flow from it—and the purpose of my conscious life is to do its will—*i.e.* to do good.

Nor do the Gospels leave us without guidance how to apply this teaching to practical life. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, chaps. v. vi. and vii.) had always attracted Tolstoy, but much of it had also perplexed him, especially the text: "Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," had seemed to him unreasonable. It shocked all the prejudices of aristocratic, family and personal "honour" in which he had been brought up. But as long as he rejected, and tried to explain away that saying, he could get no coherent sense out of the teaching of Jesus, or out of the story of his life.

As soon as he admitted to himself that perhaps Jesus meant that saying seriously, it was as though he had found the key to a puzzle—the teaching and the example fitted together and formed one complete and admirable whole. He then saw that Jesus in these chapters is very definitely summing up his practical advice, pointing out five times over, what had been taught

by "them of old times," and each time following it by the words "but I say unto you," and giving an extension, or even a flat contradiction, to the old precept.

Here are the five commandments of Christ, an acceptance of which, or even a *comprehension of, and an attempt to follow* which, would alter the whole course of men's lives in our society.

(1) "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that *everyone who is angry* with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment."

In the Russian version, as in our Authorised Version, the words, "*without a cause*" have been inserted after the word angry. This, of course, makes nonsense of the whole passage, for no one ever is angry without supposing that he has some cause. Going to the best Greek sources, Tolstoy detected this interpolation (which has been corrected in our Revised Version), and he found other passages in which the current translations obscure Christ's teaching: as for instance the popular libel on Jesus, which represents him as having flogged people in the Temple with a scourge!

This, then, is the first of these great guiding rules: *Do not be angry.*

Some people will say, We do not accept Christ's authority—why should we not be angry?

But test it any way you like—by experience, by the advice of other great teachers, or by the

example of the best men and women in their best moods, and you will find that the advice is good.

Try it experimentally, and you will find that even for your physical nature it is the best advice. If under certain circumstances—say, if dinner is not ready when you want it—you allow yourself to get very angry, you will secrete bile, which is bad for you. But if under precisely similar circumstances you keep your temper, you won't secrete bile. It will be better for you.

But, finally, one may say, "I cannot help being angry, it is my nature; I am made so." Very well; there is no danger of your doing what you can't do; but religion and philosophy exist in order to help us to think and feel rightly, and to guide us in so far as our animal nature allows us to be guided. If you can't abstain from anger altogether, *abstain from it as much as you can.*

. . . . . .

(2) "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that *everyone that looketh on a woman to lust* after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

This second great rule of conduct is: *Do not lust.*

It is not generally accepted as good advice. In all our towns things exist—certain ways of dressing, ways of dancing, some entertainments, pictures, and theatrical posters—which would not exist if everybody understood that lust is a bad thing, spoiling our lives.

Being an animal you probably cannot help lusting, but the fact that *we* are imperfect does not prevent the advice from being good. Lust as little as you can, if you cannot be perfectly pure.

. . . . . .

(3) "Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all. . . . But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay."

How absurd! says someone. Here are five great commandments to guide us in life—the first is: "Don't be angry," the second is: "Don't lust." These are really broad, sweeping rules of conduct —but the third is: "Don't say damn." What is the particular harm, or importance, of using a few swear-words?

But that, of course, is not at all the meaning of the commandment. It, too, is a broad, sweeping rule, and it means: *Do not give away the control of your future actions.* You have a reason and a conscience to guide you, but if you set them aside and swear allegiance to anyone else—Tsar, Emperor, Kaiser, King, Queen, President or General—they may some day tell you to commit the most awful crimes; perhaps even to kill your fellow-men. What are you going to do then? To break your oath, or to commit a crime you never would have dreamt of committing had you not first taken an oath.

The present Emperor of Germany, Wilhelm II., once addressed some naval recruits just after they

had taken the oath of allegiance to him. (The oath had been administered by a paid minister of Jesus Christ, on the book which says "Swear not at all.") Wilhelm II. reminded them that they had now taken the oath, and that *if he called them out to shoot their own fathers*, they must now obey!

The whole organised and premeditated system of wholesale murder, called "war," is based and built up, in all lands (in England and Russia to-day as in the Roman Empire when Jesus lived), on this practice of inducing people to entrust their consciences to the keeping of others.

But it is the fourth commandment that people most object to. In England, as in Russia, it is as yet hardly even beginning to be understood.

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(4) "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, *Resist not him that is evil;* but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

That means, do not use physical violence against men who act in a way you disapprove of. Ultimately, taken in connection with the other commandments, it means much more than that.

There are two different and opposite ways of trying to promote the triumph of good over evil. One way is the way followed by the best men, from Buddha in India, and Jesus in Palestine, down to William Lloyd Garrison in America and Leo Tolstoy in Russia. It is to seek to see the truth of things clearly, to speak it out fearlessly,

and to try to act up to it, leaving it to influence other people as the rain and the sunshine influence the plants. Men who live that way influence others; their influence spreads from land to land, and from age to age.

Think of the men who have done most good in the world, and you will find that this has been their principle.

But there is another plan, much more often tried, and still approved of by most people. It consists in making up one's mind what *other people* should do, and then using physical force, if necessary, to make them do it.

For instance, we may think that the Boers ought to let everybody vote for the election of their upper house and chief ruler, and (instead of beginning by trying the experiment at home), we may send out 200,000 men to kill Boers until they leave it to us to decide whether they shall have any votes at all.

People who act like that—Ahab, Attila, Cæsar, Napoleon, Bismarck, or Joseph Chamberlain—influence people as long as they can reach them, and even longer; but the influence that lives after them, and that spreads furthest, is to a very great extent a bad influence, inflaming men's hearts with anger, with bitter patriotism, and with malice.

These two lines of conduct are contrary the one to the other. You cannot persuade a man while he thinks you wish to hit or coerce him.

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The last commandment is the most sweeping

of all, and especially re-enforces the 1st, 3rd, and 4th.

(5) "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you . . . what do ye more than others? Do not even the Gentiles (Foreigners: Boers, Turks, etc.) the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The meaning of these five commandments, backed as they are by the example of Jesus and the drift and substance of his most emphatic teaching, is too plain to be misunderstood. It is becoming more and more difficult for the commentators and the expositors to obscure it, though to many of them the words apply: "Ye have made void the word of God because of your traditions." What Jesus meant us to do, *the direction in which he pointed us*, and the example he set us, are unmistakable. But, we are told, "it is impracticable!" "It must be wrong because it is not what *we* are doing." "It is impossible that Jesus can have pointed men to a morality higher than *ours!*"

There it is! As long as we—men or nations, are self-satisfied—like the Pharisee who thanked God he was not as other men are,—we cannot *progress*. "They that are whole need no physician."

Religion and philosophy can be of use only to those who will admit their imperfections, and willingly seek guidance.

"But it is impossible for us to cease killing men wholesale at the command of our rulers, or to cease hanging men who kill in retail without being told to. We must go on injuring one another, or evil will be sure to come of it." If so, then let us throw away Christ's religion, for it leads us astray, and let us find a better religion instead. The trouble is that the best of the other religious teachers (such as Buddha) *said the same thing!* And we can hardly admit openly that we are still worshipping Mars or Mammon.

The only other way is for us to be humble and honest about the matter and confess: "I begin to see the truth of this teaching. It points to perfection above the level we have reached; but if I am not good enough to apply it altogether, I will apply it as far as I can, and will at least not deny it, or pervert it, or try by sophistry to debase it to my own level."

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After reaching this view of life (about the year 1880 or a little earlier), Tolstoy saw that much that he had formerly considered good was bad, and much that he had thought bad was good.

If the aim of life is to co-operate with our Father in doing good, we should not seek to acquire as much property as possible for ourselves, but should seek to give as much to others, and to take as little from others as we can.

Instead of wanting the most expensive and luxurious food for ourselves, we should seek the cheapest and simplest food that will keep us in health.

Instead of wishing to be better dressed than our neighbours, and wanting to have a shiny black chimney-pot hat to show that we are superior to common folk, we should wish to wear nothing that will separate us from the other children of our Father.

Instead of seeking the most refined and pleasant work for ourselves and trying to put the rough, disagreeable work on those weaker, less able, less fortunate, or less pushing and selfish than ourselves, we should, on the contrary, make it a point of honour to do our share of what is disagreeable and ill-paid.

Economically speaking, what I take from my brethren should go to my debit, only what service I do them should go to the credit of my account.

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Tolstoy became a strict vegetarian, eating only the simplest food and avoiding stimulants. He ceased to smoke. He dressed in the simplest and cheapest manner. He gave to the peasants a large part of his property. He laboured with them in the fields, and found that hard as the work was, he enjoyed it, and strange to say, could do better mental work when he only allowed himself a few hours a day for it than he had been able to do when he gave himself up entirely to literary work. Instead of writing chiefly novels

and stories for the well-to-do and idle classes, he devoted his wonderful powers principally to clearing up those perplexing problems of human conduct which seem to block the path of progress.

Besides some stories (especially short stories for the people, and some folk-stories which he wrote down in order that they may reach those who are not accustomed to go to the peasants for instruction), and some essays and letters on important questions, his chief works during the last twenty years have been these twelve books:—

(1) *My Confession.*

(2) *A Criticism of Dogmatic Theology*, never yet translated.

(3) *The Four Gospels Harmonised and Translated*, of which two parts out of three have been (not very well) translated.

(4) *What I Believe*, sometimes called *My Religion.*

(5) *The Gospel in Brief*, a summary of *The Four Gospels*, and better suited for the general reader than the larger work.

(6) *What must we do then?* Sometimes called *What to do?*

(7) *On Life*, also called *Life:* a book not carefully finished, and not easy to read in the original. The English translation makes nonsense of it in many places.

(8) *The Kreutzer Sonata:* a story treating of the sex-question. It should be read with the *Afterword*, explaining Tolstoy's views on the subject.

(9) *The Kingdom of God is Within You.*

(10) *The Christian Teaching*: a brief summary of Tolstoy's understanding of Christ's teaching. He considers that this book still needs revision, but it will be found useful by those who have understood the works numbered 1, 4, 5 and 6 in this list.

(11) *What is Art?*

(12) *Resurrection*, a novel begun about 1895, laid aside in favour of what seemed more important work, and completely re-written and published in 1899, for the benefit of the Doukhobórs.

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The subjects that occupied him were the most important subjects of human knowledge—those which should be (though to-day they are not) emphatically called *Science*: the kind of science that occupied . . . . "Moses, Solon, Socrates, Epictetus, Confucius, Mencius, Marcus Aurelius, Spinoza, and all those who have taught men to live a moral life." He examined "the results of good and bad actions," considered the "reasonableness or unreasonableness of human institutions and beliefs," "how human life should be lived in order to obtain the greatest well-being for each," and "what one may and should, and what one cannot and should not believe; how to subdue one's passions, and how to acquire the habit of virtue."

When Tolstoy began to write boldly and plainly about these things, he quite expected to be persecuted. The Russian Government, however, has

considered it wiser not to touch him personally, but to content itself with prohibiting some of his books, mutilating others, and banishing several of those who helped him. Under the auspices of the "Holy Synod," books were published denouncing him and his views (an advertisement for which, as he remarked, Pears' Soap would have paid thousands of pounds), his correspondence was tampered with, and spies were set to watch him and his friends.

These external matters, however, did not trouble him so much as did a spiritual conflict. Indeed, at one time imprisonment would have come as a relief, solving his difficulty. The case was this: He wished to act in complete consistency with the views he had expressed, but he could not do this—could not, for instance, give away all his property—without making his wife and some of his children angry, and without the risk of their even appealing to the authorities to restrain him. This perplexed him very much; but he felt that he could not do good by doing harm. No external rule, such as that people should give all they have to the poor, would justify him in creating anger and bitterness in the hearts of those nearest to him. So, eventually, he handed over the remains of his property to his wife and his family, and continued to live in a good house with servants as before; meekly bearing the reproach that he was "inconsistent," and contenting himself with doing, in addition to his literary work, what manual labour he

could, and living as simply and frugally as possible.

At the time of the great famine in 1891-1892 circumstances seemed to compel him to undertake the great work of organising and directing the distribution of relief to the starving peasants. Large sums of money passed through his hands, and all Europe and America applauded him. But he, himself, felt that such activity, of collecting and distributing money, "making a pipe of oneself," was not the best work of which he was capable. It did not satisfy him. It is not by what we get others to do for pay, but rather by what we do with our own brains, hearts and muscles, that we can best serve God and man.

Since 1895 he has again braved the Russian Government by giving publicity to the facts it was trying to conceal, about the persecution of the Doukhobórs in the Caucasus. To aid these men, who refused military service on principle, he broke his rule of taking no money for his writings, and sold the first right of publication of *Resurrection*. But of this act, too, he now repents. Whether for himself or for others, he has found that the attempt to get property, money or goods, is apt to be a hindrance to, rather than a means of forwarding, the service of God and man.

Tolstoy is no faultless and infallible prophet whose works should be swallowed as bibliolaters swallow the Bible; but he is a man of extraordinary capacity, sincerity and self-sacrifice, who

has for more than twenty years striven to make absolutely plain to all, the solution of some of the most vital problems of existence. What he has said, is part, and no small part, of that truth which shall set men free. It is of interest and importance to all who will hear it, especially to the common folk who do most of the rough work and get least of the praise or pay. But, in England, his message has not yet reached those who most need it, or it has reached them in perverted forms. Many of the "cultured crowd" who write and talk about him as a genius, twist his views beyond all recognition. They enter not in themselves, neither suffer they them that are entering in, to enter.

The work he has set himself to co-operate in is not the expansion of an Empire, nor is it the establishment of a Church; for man's perception of truth is *progressive*, and again and again finds itself hampered by forms and dogmas of State and Church. Sooner or later we must break such outward form, as the chicken breaks its shell when the time comes. The work to which Tolstoy has set himself is a work to which each of us is also called—it is the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God, that is, of Truth and Good.

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TALKS WITH TOLSTOY

SOME ten years ago my brother-in-law, Dr Alexéeff, offered to take me to call on Tolstoy, who had written a preface (*Why do people stupify themselves?*) to a book the Doctor had written on the drink question. At the tea-table I found myself just opposite Tolstoy, of whose works I had then read but little, and I ventured the remark that I understood that he disapproved of money-making, and that this interested me because I was in Russia with just the object of trying to make some money.

This led to a conversation which did not alter my views. I felt that I had the authority of the science of political economy behind me, and that I only needed fully to comprehend Tolstoy's position in order to be able to point out its fundamental fallacies.

Our conversation was soon interrupted, but when we left, Tolstoy said a few kind words and asked me to call again. This I did not do at that time, partly out of shyness and partly from a feeling that it would not do to teach Tolstoy political economy, and from a disbelief that he had anything important to teach me about it.

Years passed during which the talk with Tolstoy clung to my mind, and during which also, though

the business I was engaged in was a prosperous one, the strain and worry of competitive commercial life told on my nerves and health. I began to see that political economy needed hitching on to the rest of life, and read Tolstoy's later works with attention.

At last I found myself again at the same tea-table, but this time approaching Tolstoy with a different feeling. I was sure that his message was important and contained much truth, but—why was he living in a comfortable house? Why did he not put into action the whole of his teaching? I am ashamed to say that, disregarding the presence of visitors, I put the point bluntly to him. I was in earnest, and,—as sometimes happens when people are in earnest,—not merely the conventions, but regard for other people's feelings, were forgotten. Tolstoy did not then reply to my questions, but at parting—though he was not yet sure of my sincerity,—he again asked me to come to see him. This time I did not delay doing so. In private, in his own study, he explained to me some things I have alluded to in my article on "Leo Tolstoy," and from that time till the day I left Russia I never missed an opportunity of obtaining guidance and instruction from him.

I was more developed mentally than spiritually, and, at first, more inclined to discuss external matters than questions of the inner life, but the one led on to the other.

Tolstoy, I remember, speaking one day of the

fact that some people seem led towards goodness by the heart, and others by the head, said that the latter was in some respects the better process. "You may be weary and wish to turn back, but when you have unravelled the tangle of life you see clearly that there is nowhere to turn back to: you must go on."

The present paper merely aims at preserving some *obiter dicta* on external matters. Though themselves not of the deepest importance, they are connected with the great problems of life and seem worth preserving.

His opinions did not result from casual likes and dislikes, but were knit together by his perception of the meaning and purpose of life. One could seldom predict what he would say (even on subjects with which I was familiar, his views often came as a surprise), but when he had spoken, it was generally easy to see how the conclusions expressed fitted in with his whole view of life.

When among sympathetic friends, the connection between his general views and his particular opinion on whatever subject was under discussion was specially evident, and the talk would turn easily to the great problems of life. He would suit his conversation to the company, but to whomever he was speaking, and whatever the particular subject might be, anyone in touch with him could readily see that his opinions all fitted into a general scheme. Literature, art, science, politics, economics, social problems, sex-relations, and local news, were not subjects detached from

each other, as they are in the minds of many men; they were all viewed as parts of an ordered whole.

In a good game of chess, played by an expert, there is a logical sequence between the moves, so that the purpose of even the most unexpected *coups* can be puzzled out; and in this it differs from a game of ordinary drawing-room chess, the moves in which are a series of accidents mitigated by occasional ideas. And there is a similar difference between the talk of a man who has a clear idea of the purpose of human life, and the talk of men who are at sea on that matter.

I do not know how far this characteristic of Tolstoy's talk will be observable in the following gathering together of scraps of conversations on books and authors. On many the first impression a talk with Tolstoy makes is that he is not saying what other people say—and is therefore eccentric; and I fear that in an attempt to reproduce his views of books and writers it will be easier to convey the unorthodoxy than the validity of some of his opinions.

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Novel-writing, Tolstoy says, stands, both in England and France, on a much lower level to-day than it did when he was a young man. Dickens and Victor Hugo were then in their prime—and who is there to-day to match them? They willingly dealt with subject-matter of vital importance, and treated it so that their readers caught their feeling. They dealt with the emotions of pity and affection and sympathy, were

concerned for the poor and oppressed, and showed indignation at established wrongs in a manner that went home to men's hearts.

Now, Tolstoy says, writers are dealing with all sorts of social problems, psychological studies, exact copyings of nature, ethical conundrums, and pseudo-scientific puzzles—but, for the most part, they fail to deal with essential matters in such a way as to reach the hearts of the people. Among contemporary English novelists whose works he has read he does not know of any whom he esteems more than Mrs Humphrey Ward. She knows what she means, and does not approve and disapprove of things haphazard.

I asked whether Olive Schreiner's *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* (in spite of the passage where the vision of Christ sends a message to the Queen of England, bidding her to *use her soldiers* worthily) did not rank high in his sympathies. But he had not read the book. Of *Dreams* his opinion was not high. The main objection, I think, was that Olive Schreiner deals with some problems of immense importance, without so clear and firm a perception of their bearings as would enable her to give right guidance to those who are attracted by her poetic treatment, and by her sympathetic leanings towards what is good. *Dreams* are likely to please those most, whose own ideas are somewhat vague and unsettled.

Had he read *Trooper Peter Halket* I think he would have modified his opinion of Olive

Schreiner's work, and have ranked that book, by the side of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, among what he calls works of "religious art"—*i.e.* books making current among us feelings in accord with the best thoughts of our age.

Of Zola, Tolstoy speaks in commendation in one respect. Here are we all talking about the "people," about their rights, and about the ways of raising them, etc., etc.; and here is Zola, who has depicted common people and shown us—there—these are the folk you are talking about!

On the other hand, Zola's realism, in so far as it consists in photographing a mass of details, is not art, transmitting feeling from man to man. Man must discriminate between what is essential and what is worthless in life, not pile up mountains of undigested facts,—and this is true of the artist as well as of the man.

Sienkiéwicz, Tolstoy says, is always readable; but what he writes is tinged with his Catholicism. In *Quo vadis* the Christians and Pagans are too white and too black; they should shade off into each other and overlap, as they must have done in real life, and as the persecuted Russian Stundists to-day shade off into, and mix with, the Russian Orthodox.

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Frankness and clearness have a great charm for Tolstoy. The mistakes and errors of a man who is clear are more likely to be of use than the half-truths of those who are content to be indefinite. On any matter, to express yourself so

that you cannot be understood is bad. The chief defect of Walt Whitman is, that with all his enthusiasm, he yet lacks a clear philosophy of life. On some vital issues he stands at the parting of two ways and does not show us which way to go.

A great literature arises when there is a great moral awakening. Take, for instance, the emancipation period, when the struggle for the abolition of serfdom was going on in Russia, and the anti-slavery movement was alive in the United States. See what writers appeared: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Thoreau, Emerson, Lowell, Whittier, Longfellow, William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Parker, and others in America; Dostoyévsky, Tourgényeff, Herzen, Gógol, Nekrásoff, Nádson, and others in Russia. The period that followed, when men were not bracing themselves to sacrifice materic considerations for moral ones, would have been a barren time had not some writers, nurtured and formed in the heroic period, been left to carry on its tradition.

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Tolstoy speaks very highly of Matthew Arnold's works on religion. He says that the usual estimate puts Arnold's poems first, his critical writings second, and his religious works third; but that this is just the reverse of a true estimate. The religious writings are his best and most important work. That Tolstoy has rightly gauged the "usual estimate" finds confirmation in the book on *Matthew Arnold*, since published by Professor Saintsbury, in which *Literature and Dogma, God*

and the Bible, A Comment on Christmas, etc., are classed as "these unfortunate books," and we are told that "nobody wants religion of that sort."

Tolstoy considered that Arnold's essay on his own (Tolstoy's) writings contained sound and just criticism. Indeed, it was Tolstoy's fortune to be introduced to the general reader in England and America by the best sponsors he could have had. Not the least among the services rendered by Matthew Arnold and William Dean Howells is the cordial welcome with which, many years ago, each of them on his own side of the Atlantic greeted an author whose views are, even to-day, singularly little understood by some who profess to admire them.

Wishing to induce Tolstoy to admit the merits of some of Matthew Arnold's poems, I marked a few, such as *Rugby Chapel, To a Republican Friend, The Divinity, Progress, Revolution, Self-dependence*, and *Morality*, and sent them to him. He returned the book in a few days with the remark that they were very good, "but what a pity they were not written in prose!"

In poetry Tolstoy is, indeed, hard to please. Why, he asks, need men hamper the clear expression of their thoughts by selecting a style which obliges them to choose, not the words which best express their meaning, but those that best enable them to get the lines to scan? If we can say what we have to say in three words, why use five? Or if a word or two more will avoid the risk of being misunderstood, why not add them?

People have written valuable things in verse; but they could, in most cases, have said them better in prose. And how much worthless stuff has been circulated merely for the sake of the skill with which it was expressed!

Similarly of eloquence: a visitor one day was speaking of the charm of eloquence. "Yes," said Tolstoy, "but what a *dangerous* thing it is," and he went on to tell how he heard a celebrated advocate pleading a cause and had found it difficult not to allow his own judgment to be warped by the mercenary eloquence of the lawyer.

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Tolstoy is too truthful not to tell those who consult him his real opinion of their work; but he is too considerate to like hurting their feelings, and as the standard he sets for himself and for others is very high, he often finds himself in a difficult position.

I remember one afternoon, at Yásnaya Polyána, how he came to the tea-table, set out in the open air, and told us that an old man, retired from Government service, had just been with him in his study showing him a long poem. Tolstoy had asked him to read some verses of it, and, though he feared the old gentleman would be angry, was obliged to tell him that it was terrible rubbish. Indeed, judging by some scraps that Tolstoy laughingly repeated, the poem must have been unusually bad. Fortunately, however, the visitor turned out to be one of the most even-tempered of mortals, and merely said: "You

don't mean to say so; why here have I been ten years composing it, and thought it was so good!" and then took his departure, apparently in no way disturbed by the verdict pronounced on his production.

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I once asked Tolstoy how he accounted for the supreme rank among authors accorded to Shakespear in Russia and elsewhere. He said he explained it to himself by the fact, that the "cultured crowd" who care for these things have no clear idea of the purpose and aim of life. And they can most readily and heartily admire an author who is like themselves in this respect—*i.e.* one with no central standpoint from which to measure his relation to all else. Shakespear owes his great reputation to the fact that he is an artist of great and varied abilities; but he owes it yet more to the fact that he shares with his admirers this great weakness—that he has not found the answer to the question, What are we alive for?

From Shakespear to the *Review of Reviews* is a far cry, but the same perception of man's need of guidance,—and of the possibility of good guidance being supplied (as it was by Socrates, Lao-Tsze, Buddha, and others more familiar to us) if our ears are open and we are willing to concentrate our attention primarily on what is really important,—underlies the view he expressed of that magazine. It should be premised that he was not comparing the *Review of Reviews* with other periodicals, but was rather contrasting it with what we should

desire from the literature we read. A visitor remarked that the *Review of Reviews* (a copy of which happened to be lying about) always gave him a headache, and Tolstoy replied that that was just the effect it had on him, though he had hardly realised it till he heard the remark made. The jumble of facts and opinions of all sorts, not co-ordinated by any consistent central perception, is what causes the mental strain. Even in the original parts of the magazine, what is one to make of the mixture of patriotism and Christianity pulling different ways, but both considered good? love of liberty and laudation of autocrats? love of peace, and desire to have the map of Africa painted red, etc.?

Mr Stead wants to have two patriotisms: a bad patriotism, which he calls Jingoism, and a good patriotism. But he never defines the one or the other, so as to enable us to know when the line of right is being overstepped. Every patriotism (*i.e.* deliberate preference for *our own* country), by tending to make us jealous and suspicious of the men of other nations, or willing to injure them, does harm.

Of course the criticism applies to most journalism, and Tolstoy is emphatic as to the advisability of giving a preference to books rather than to ephemeral literature. I hear that Tolstoy, showing a copy of Mr Stead's *War against War* to a friend recently, spoke of it with approval, saying that he had not time to read it carefully, but that at any rate it was an effort in a right direction.

From myself I would add that it should be noted that, when Mr Stead's patriotic desire to see Africa painted red begins to be realised, his conscience revolts; and, facing unpopularity, danger and abuse, he labours manfully to avert the evils he has helped to produce. It is largely due to his efforts that some protest against the Imperialist policy in South Africa has made itself audible. I cannot but regret that he has, as yet, not gone to the roots of the question, and is still a patriot, unable clearly to define when we are, and when we are not, justified in killing our fellow-men, but I heartily recognise the great advance he has made during the last couple of years.

Speaking of Stead's *Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* crusade, I happened to mention that many people blamed Stead for giving publicity to such a subject, but that, so far as one can estimate such things, the good effected seemed to outweigh the harm done: wrongs which some women have to endure, all may bear at least to hear of, if exposure is a means towards destroying the evil. Tolstoy listened till I had finished, looked at me, and merely said: "And do you also approve of the deception practised when collecting the evidence and in obtaining the girls?" Short of pleading that "the end justifies the means"—which I could not do—there was no way to meet this simple question without abandoning my justification of at least part of the crusade.

Tolstoy has indeed a remarkable knack of making quite obvious remarks which stick in the

hearer's mind and make it impossible for him to think as he thought before.

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A compilation which particularly pleases Tolstoy, is the *Labour Annual*, edited by Joseph Edwards, and giving information about various "advanced" movements. I suspect that some of the movements look more important on paper than they do in real life, and that some of the "advanced" groups would, on closer acquaintance, strike Tolstoy as being two thousand years behind the times. But, be that as it may, the indication such a work gives of the fact that our system of land-owning and manufacturing is no more final than slavery or feudalism were, is encouraging to a reformer surrounded by appearances that on the surface, seem to indicate stagnation.

For a similar reason, he was very pleased to hear of the immense sale of Robert Blatchford's little book *Merrie England*—though he would not endorse all that it contains.

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For the socialism of Karl Marx, and the theory that fate has decreed that the control of the implements of production must pass into fewer and fewer hands before the condition of the masses can improve, Tolstoy has as little respect as he has for Malthus' law of the superfecundity of the human race. Such attempts to ascertain, and declare as final and immutable, certain "laws of human nature" discovered, not subjectively—by knowing man's heart—but by mere external observations,

do not commend themselves to him. He especially objects to the demand that we should adjust our actions to such imaginary laws, and subordinate to them those moral scruples which form part of our inner consciousness. People who see that our social conditions are bad, and who yet wish neither to alter their own manner of life nor to admit that they are doing wrong, are very apt to accept such "scientific laws" as a shield for themselves. They say: "things are wrong; but it is all God's fault, and is inevitable. Were we to act as our consciences demand, no good would come of it. The only sensible thing to do is to go on, acting in the way which has produced these wrong social conditions, until the Social Democrats re-organise society by means of a parliamentary majority." Many church people say something of the same kind; only they want us to wait, not for a Social Democratic majority, but for the Millennium. In opposition to such views, Tolstoy holds that if we would know the will of God and be willing co-workers with Him, there is only one way, and that is to be as *good* as we can. If we all did that, property, and the means of production, would *not* accumulate in fewer and fewer hands, nor should we breed like rabbits up to the limits of the food supply, nor should we need to wait for the external coming of a Kingdom that must be within us before it can be externally manifest.

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Of P. Kropotkin, though he does not know him personally, Tolstoy has a high opinion; regarding

him as an honourable and earnest worker in the cause of brotherhood, and a man of conspicuous ability. But he does not hesitate to mention the weak spots he discerns, even in those who have suffered in the cause of freedom, and he much regrets that Kropotkin does not explicitly and decidedly express disapproval of all violence—whether directed against Governments, or used by Governments. He thinks it must be a mistaken sense of loyalty to the companions and traditions of his youth that keeps Kropotkin among the justifiers or excusers of physical force methods. "He must see that by excusing violence, he cuts the ground from under his own feet." If the struggle in Russia to-day were clearly one between men in power trying to enforce their will by violence, and reformers saying and doing what they believe to be right and repudiating all violence, the sympathy of every good man would be against the Government. But by employing force, and justifying its use, the anarchist confuses the issue, and obliges people to choose between two sets of men, each abusing the other, and each saying it is right to kill some men, and to use violence sometimes. That is why so many hesitate to sympathise with either party.

Of Kropotkin's *La Conquête du Pain*, Tolstoy says that the part treating of the present basis of production and distribution is good, and the explanation of the advantages of a more brotherly order of society is good. But Kropotkin does not

explain how he expects *the transition* from the old to the new order to come about. It is not to come gradually, as a consequence of a change in our perceptions, characters, and aims, but it is to be introduced by a revolution to which a section of society objects. How is this to be done? By using force! But the use of force causes dislike and hatred, and the wish to retaliate. So that the Anarchist-Communist, having overthrown the existing order of society by force, will have to guard against attempts to restore it by force; and there will again be some people governing others, not by convincing them but by coercing them.

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Tolstoy keeps a keen look out for works in other languages (especially short, clearly expressed, and original works), that it would be useful to have translated into Russian. Very often the works he selects are not allowed to be printed in Russia; but in such cases, when he has got someone to translate it, copies are made on a type-writer, and the work gets a limited circulation, and is more or less secured against the risk of being entirely eradicated by the police (who frequently search the lodgings of people suspected of Tolstoyan propaganda), and it is thus ready to be printed should the day dawn when the press-censorship in Russia will be less irksome than it now is. In spite of the activity of the secret police in watching his friends, seizing their papers, and causing their banishment from central

Russia, the works Tolstoy recommends usually get translated. This has been the case with the next books I will mention.

The Anatomy of Misery, by J. C. Kenworthy, a small book on economics, greatly pleased Tolstoy by its brevity, its clearness, and its thoroughness in going to the roots of the question. He thought, however, that the subsequent work of this author, though much of it is good, did not come up to the high standard set by the book mentioned.

Thoreau's *Essay on Civil Disobedience* he selects as the best of all Thoreau's writings. Its great merit lies in its clear statement of man's right to repudiate, and refuse in any way to support, a Government which acts immorally. The State of Massachusetts connived at the maintenance of slavery. Thoreau was disinclined to devote himself to politics, but was also disinclined to support a Government of which he disapproved. So he refused to pay the poll-tax, allowed himself to be imprisoned, and wrote *Civil Disobedience*, which may yet prove to be the source from which a telling protest against war, or other evils enforced by Government, will spring. Neither this nor Kenworthy's book could be printed in Russia.

Among other books translated into Russian with Tolstoy's approval and by his advice are: *On Compromise*, by John Morley, Sabatier's *Vie de S. François d'Assise*, some of Guy de Maupassant's short stories, and extracts from Amiel's *Journal Intime*, the latter translated by Tolstoy's daughter, the Countess Mary Tolstoy, now Princess Obo-

lénsky. To the work last named he contributed an important preface, as also to *The Ethics of Diet*, by Howard Williams,* writing, too, a brief introduction to Dr Alice Stockham's *Tokology*. Another work, the translation of which into Russian (by Vera Johnston), though not undertaken at his suggestion, was warmly approved of by him, was the philosophical writings of Shankaracarya. Quite recently Tolstoy has recommended for translation into Russian, Allen Clarke's *The Effects of the Factory System*, with which he was much pleased.

Besides Howard Williams' book, others on vegetarianism have been translated from English into Russian by Tolstoy's advice or with his approval,—*e.g.* H. S. Salt's *Humanitarianism, its Principles and Progress*, and *Flesh or Fruit*; and also Dr Anna Kingsford's *Scientific Basis of Vegetarianism*.

I remember his telling me of a young Englishman visiting at Yásnaya Polyána, who said he was the only vegetarian in his family. "Do you not have squalls with your people?" asked Tolstoy. "Squalls?" replied the visitor, "we have hurricanes!" "And that is how it must be," remarked Tolstoy, who does not believe that we should hide our light under a bushel, or allow the weight of social prejudice to crush the outward manifestations of the faith that is in us. As he grows older, however, though his fiery ardour for reform does not cool, he increases in gentleness, and learns, what to him has been a hard lesson, that "the

* *The First Step*, published by Albert Broadbent, Manchester.

meek shall inherit the earth," and that to get the best results with the limited strength allotted to us, we must seek, as much as may be, to avoid creating friction.

Modern Science, one of the essays published in Edward Carpenter's *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*, was printed in Russia, Tolstoy contributing a preface. The issue raised in this essay is: Are scientists, when they are investigating Nature, dealing with absolute truths, "facts," and reaching the bottom of things? or are they merely studying the relation of phenomena to our perceptions? Tolstoy agrees with Carpenter that we must not hope to "explain man by mechanics"; what we can know of nature being only its relation to ourselves. Tolstoy agrees also with what Carpenter says of existing social conditions, and with his remark that "the progress of civilisation" has always (as in Egypt, Greece, or Rome) led on, step by step, to ultimate dissolution, and that there is no sufficient reason to suppose that our present "progress" in Europe or America is leading anywhere else. "Why did I not think of that for myself—it is so obvious," said Tolstoy.

But on the Sex-Question (the S.Q., as it is beginning to be called) Tolstoy and Carpenter represent precisely opposite poles of thought.

Both would agree that the serious discussion of this question has been burked, especially in England and America; that on no subject do conventional misconceptions flourish more luxuriantly; and that the results of such falsehood

and concealment are evil. But here agreement would end.

Tolstoy would say that the direction in which true progress lies is clearly perceptible, not only "in thy mouth and in thy heart," but in the teaching of all the greatest prophets and religious leaders of mankind. The course you will follow if you discern the ideal of perfection, will be the resultant of two different forces. One part of your nature (since you are an animal) will draw you one way. Another part of your nature (since you are divine and have perceived the ideal) will draw you another way.

The virtue to aim at, is chastity. If you cannot be perfectly chaste—be as chaste as you can. The founders of all great religions have recognised this tacitly and partially, if not expressly and fully. Those of them who have given fixed rules of conduct have drawn the line of what was admissible, not further from chastity, but rather nearer to chastity, than was customary in their time and place. Polygamy was no doubt an advance, in most cases, on what went before it, but even a strict monogamy does not solve all difficulties, nor reach the highest approach to purity conceivable by man.

In Carpenter's view chastity is not a virtue. It would seem from what he has written on the subject, that guidance, either by pointing out an ideal to aim at, or by indicating fixed rules of conduct, cannot be given. People must make their own experiments. How far men and women

may go "in default of more certain physiological knowledge than we have, is a matter which can only be left to the good sense and feeling of those concerned." Poor humanity, according to Edward Carpenter, must wander in the wilderness of perplexity till the teachers of physiology can point a path which the teachers of morality have failed to find. This is the very opposite of Tolstoy's view of the matter.

Of Grant Allen's *The Woman who Did*, he remarked, that if the author wished to show us how his theory would work out in real life, he should not have killed off the hero so soon. Trouble arises when, of two people, one wishes to be unfaithful while the other is still faithful—but if you kill off one of the two, you have evaded the problem. As to the theory that a woman should be free to choose the father of her next child, so as to produce the "best" child she can—Tolstoy replied: "If you are talking about breeding horses—well and good. Then we can have a definite idea of what sort of horse we want:—clean cut hoofs, thin legs, wide chest, shape of back and flanks, head, etc.,—but about a child you can have no such definite idea of what you want to produce — is it to be a Shakespear, a Pascal, a Plato, or a martyr?"

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A writer with whom Tolstoy is very much in sympathy is Henry George. Both the matter and the manner of *Social Problems* and *Progress and Poverty* please him greatly. In the middle

of this century the great question was, in Russia, the abolition of serfdom; and, in America, the abolition of slavery. To free the land is "the next great question." Henry George has directed attention to it; he has not only expressed himself with clearness, individuality, and persuasive force, but his practical scheme for dealing with the problem in a political society such as now exists appears to Tolstoy to be workable, and the best that has been proposed.

We here come upon what, at first sight, looks like a strange contradiction. Tolstoy disapproves of the use of violence between man and man. Not even an Emperor, or a Government elected by a majority, has a right to execute anybody or to imprison anybody. He is a peaceful anarchist. Yet he is delighted with Henry George, whose system pre-supposes the existence of a government enforcing the decisions of a majority on a possibly reluctant minority — and he would be glad to see the single-tax introduced in Russia.

But the contradiction admits of explanation. It is as though a man in Quebec made up his mind to go as quickly as possible to Vancouver's Island and live there in the country. He meets another man who knows how best and most cheaply to get to Montreal. The first man joins the second man, and having convinced himself that Montreal is the next point he must make for on his way to Vancouver's Island, he feels a keen interest in his companion's preparations for the journey, and heartily admires his skill in packing and arranging;

though all the time his own aspirations are set on a country home on the Pacific coast, and he cares little for cities or railways.

"The great majority of people still believe in governments and legality—then let them, at least, see that they get good laws," says Tolstoy. That this generation should maintain laws which will make the large majority of those who will work the land in the next generation depend upon a small number of men who will be born entitled to possess the land—appears to him utterly wrong. And that a few of the strongest, cleverest, or most grasping of the labourers may succeed in becoming landlords does not mend matters.

He asked me once, when I had been to England for a few weeks, how the single-tax movement was getting on.

I said that I thought it was a small movement not making much way.

"How is that—when the question is one of such enormous importance?"

Well, I thought that the great majority of Englishmen were too conservative to attend to it, and the Socialists and other advanced parties had gone past Henry George and recognised interest and private property in the means of production as being also wrong.

"That is a pity," said Tolstoy: "If the Conservatives are too conservative to attend to it, and the advanced parties have gone past it—who is to do this work that so urgently needs doing?"

Speaking of the same subject Tolstoy remarked

that some men are born with the qualities and the *limitations* that enable them to concentrate their powers on some one subject that needs attention, and to see all that relates to it, without seeing anything that would turn their energies in other directions. So we get a Cobden to abolish corn-laws, and a Henry George to elucidate the land question. God needs such labourers as much as he does men of a wider sweep of perception.

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A work of Henry George's that Tolstoy is fond of recommending, besides his more important and better known works, is that careful investigation of Herbert Spencer's change of front on the land question, *A Perplexed Philosopher*. Herbert Spencer is not a favourite of Tolstoy's. Asked one day whether he had made a careful study of Herbert Spencer's many volumes, he replied: "I have set to work several times; but it is like chewing chaff!" The fundamental difference between the views of the two men lies in a matter to which I have already alluded — one which frequently comes to the front in Tolstoy's thoughts. To Herbert Spencer and his school (though he objects to being called a materialist) the *real* things are the external phenomena observed through our senses. These are called upon to explain everything, even to explain our subjective consciousness of a moral law. To Tolstoy the latter consciousness is the surest and most fundamental perception we possess. That we discern a difference between good and evil is

the *starting-point* of all thought and activity. "Goodness is really the fundamental metaphysical conception which forms the essence of our consciousness; it is a conception not defined by reason; it is that which can be defined by nothing else but which defines everything else; it is the highest, the eternal, aim of life. Whatever our perception of the good may be, our life is nothing but an effort towards the good—*i.e.* towards God. The good is that which we call God."

Yet Tolstoy readily admits that the Synthetic Philosophy has its very strong side. Our senses make us aware of external phenomena, and our perceptions of phenomena are subject to fixed laws which can be investigated. And as long as we do not forget that it is merely the relation of our perceptions to phenomena that we are dealing with, such investigation is in its place, and materialistic philosophy may be admirable and valid.

In *What is Art?* Tolstoy summarises the physiological evolutionary definition of art thus: "Art is an activity arising even in the animal kingdom, and springing from sexual desire and the propensity to play." (Schiller, Darwin, Spencer.) But he says this is far from being exact, because—"Instead of speaking about the artistic activity itself, which is the real matter in hand, it treats of the *derivation* of art." Similarly on other subjects Tolstoy seeks to deal with problems *as they affect us*, while the evolutionary philosophy (whatever truth it possesses), is still striving "to

set up an explanation of phenomena which shall be valid in itself, and without reference to the mental condition of those who set it up," as Edward Carpenter says.

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Having mentioned Tolstoy's objection to the physiological evolutionary school of esthetics, which is sometimes called the English school, let it be also mentioned that I have heard him speak with commendation of "the characteristically practical and definite work" done by English writers on esthetics.

Home (Lord Kames), in the eighteenth century, made a real contribution in his definition of beauty; and Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Grant Allen, and James Sully, in the nineteenth century, if they have treated of but one side of the matter, have at least avoided losing their way in the metaphysical obscurities of the German school, and have also made a definite contribution.

Darwin's remarks on the origin of music being discernible in the call of birds to their mates, struck Tolstoy as being particularly good.

Among Chinese philosophers, Lao-Tsze is the one Tolstoy prefers, and he once planned and himself commenced a Russian translation of the *Tao-Tih-King*, based on the existing European versions.

Of J. S. Mill's works, Tolstoy remarked that what he liked best was the *Autobiography*. "It is amazing," said Tolstoy, "that a man should have

gone so far in his experience of life, and should have put the vital question so clearly and so well, and yet should have stopped short without finding the answer." Mill asked himself whether the realisation of all the projects for the well-being of humanity on which he was engaged would make him happy,—and he frankly admitted that they would not. He was thus left face to face with the question: What then is the real purpose of my existence?

Tolstoy's reply would be to this effect: The purpose of my life is to understand, and, as far as possible, to do, the will of that Power which has sent me here, and which actuates my reason and conscience.

Mill found no answer, and lived on with a sense that the brightness had faded from life.

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Tolstoy has projected many works that he has not found time to produce. He would much like to write a short work on philosophy, and he thinks this might be done in such a way as to make his philosophical view plain to any intelligent cabman.

In philosophy Kant's work is indispensable for us who live after him. There is no getting away from the fundamental difference between *subjective* and *objective* perceptions. But Kant's style is abominable, and Kant did not do all that is needed. A. Spir, a Russian, who wrote in German and in French, carried Kant's work forward.

Tolstoy recommends a little book of less than 200 pages, *Esquises de Philosophie Critique*, as containing a concise statement of Spir's conclusions. The work does not entirely satisfy Tolstoy, but he is in fundamental agreement with it as far as it goes.

Spir's work not being well known in England, it may be well to quote the following characteristic passages approved of by Tolstoy:—

"The perception that God is neither the cause nor, in any sense, a sufficient reason of the existence of the world, and cannot be used to explain it, establishes the independence of physical science, *vis-a-vis* of morality and religion. The perception that the physical world is abnormal, founded on a delusion, and that physical science has only a relative truth, establishes the independence and the primacy of morality and of religion, *vis-a-vis* of physical science."

"To sacrifice the moral to the physical as is done at present, is to sacrifice the reality to a shadow; it is to commit a mistake which has to be expiated at a great price, for it is to sacrifice all that can give value to life."

And elsewhere: "One obligation that we owe to truth has never been recognised explicitly enough. The obligation not to lie, not to say what you do not believe to be true, is recognised; but the obligation to accept as true only what is satisfactorily proved to be so, is not recognised."

To the trend of thought represented by Nietzsche, Tolstoy attaches great and sinister importance. At the Renaissance, a movement of

animalism showed itself in Europe, but that revolt of man's lower nature soon broke its force against the seriousness that then still lived in Church Christianity. A similar tendency is now reviving, expressing itself in the philosophy of Nietzsche and in the art of the decadents, but it now meets no such formidable breakwater—the Churches are too rotten to offer serious resistance to it.

Feeling that the only power capable of resisting the attacks of materialism and animalism is the "inward light" operating through man's reason and conscience, Tolstoy is ready to welcome all that shows how untenable are the positions which Churchmen still try to defend, and how inadequate the proofs they rely on. The following incident illustrates this. He had one day been reading a book by a German professor tending to show that, as an historical personage, Jesus Christ probably never existed. (It was after I had left Russia, but the story was told me by the lady who, at Tolstoy's request, translated into Russian part of the book in question.) This delighted Tolstoy. "They are attacking the last of the outworks," said he, "and if they carry it, and demonstrate that Christ never was born, it will be all the more evident that the fortress of religion is impregnable. Take away the Church, the traditions, the Bible, and even Christ himself: the ultimate fact of man's knowledge of goodness, *i.e.* of God, directly through reason and conscience, will be as clear and certain as ever, and it will be seen that we are dealing with truths that can never perish

—truths that humanity can never afford to part with."

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At an early stage of my intimacy with Tolstoy I took him one of Professor Herron's books, thinking that he would be delighted with it. But he gave it me back with the remark that Herron was not clear, and was still using terms such as "redemption" in a semi-orthodox and confusing manner. Soon after this he received a letter from Professor Herron, who sent him one of his books. Tolstoy answered frankly, though he feared that his letter might hurt Herron; but a reply came which charmed Tolstoy by its gentle and courteous acceptance of his straightforward criticism.

Between Herron and Tolstoy there is the obvious similarity that both insist emphatically that the economics of Jesus must be taken seriously. But there is a great difference between Tolstoy's uncompromising call to poverty and simplicity of life, and Herron's eloquent involutions on the "social sacrifice of conscience."

In personal intercourse both these men impress one equally by their obvious sincerity and their thoughtful consideration for those they meet. As prophets, their messages begin alike but end differently.

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Mention is so frequently made of "Tolstoy Colonies" in connection with groups of people trying to get "back to the land" and to simplify their lives, that it is often assumed that Tolstoy

recommends people to make such experiments. The following words, from a letter written in March 1896, concerning a small group who called themselves the "Brotherhood Church" in Croydon, and who were preparing to start a "Colony" at Purleigh, in Essex, may help to correct this mistake.

"Last night I dreamed that I was in Croydon with you and made acquaintance with all our friends, with Mr Baker and some ladies, and we had a great discussion with them on the theme which is to me always the nearest at heart—*i.e.* that we must all of us direct our whole strength, *not to our outer surroundings* (in my dream I saw that yours was a Community in a big house), *but to the inner life*!"

Four months later he wrote again: "I think that a great part of the evil of the world is due to our wishing to see the realisation of what we are striving at, but *are not yet ready for*, and our being therefore satisfied with the semblance of that which should be. . . . We are so created that we cannot become perfect, either one by one or in groups, but (from the very nature of the case) only all together."

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Speaking on education, he said that if a child lack appetite we do not force food down his throat with a spoon, but we give him fresh air and exercise. So if a child lack desire for knowledge, do not cram his head with lessons which may make him permanently hate learning; but

rather seek for him those healthy conditions in which the child's natural desire for knowledge will revive.

We must not hope to bring up our children well so long as we ourselves live in artificial and abnormal surroundings. We cannot go on living wrongly, and yet educate them well. If the children see the parents living simply, and doing work the need for which is obvious, they will soon wish to share in the activities of the grown-up people, and will take pains to learn to do so. And if the parents are keenly alive to questions of general interest, this will excite the curiosity of the children also, and the latter will begin to think, and to pick up knowledge almost instinctively. Sending children away to school, and letting them become estranged from us just when their minds are forming, is a very bad way of shirking our duties.

Education and instruction are two different things. When it is a question of imparting instruction, it is quite right that classes should be formed, and that children should learn together. There is a natural competition among children the stimulus of which should not be lost by isolating them from their fellows.

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On another occasion:

"I divide men," said Tolstoy, "into two lots. They are Freethinkers, or they are Not-Freethinkers. I am not speaking of the Freethinkers who form a political party in Germany, nor of

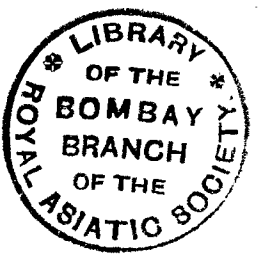
the agnostic English Freethinkers, but I am using the word in its simplest meaning." Freethinkers are those who are willing to use their minds without prejudice, and without fearing to understand things that clash with their own customs, privileges, or beliefs. This state of mind is not common, but it is essential for right thinking; where it is absent, discussion is apt to become worse than useless. A man may be a Catholic, a Frenchman, or a capitalist, and yet be a Freethinker; but if he puts his Catholicism, his patriotism, or his interest, above his reason, and will not give the latter free play where those subjects are touched, he is not a Freethinker. His mind is in bondage.

On another occasion, when we were speaking of religion, Tolstoy made the startling statement that—"There are two Gods." He went on, however, to explain himself: "There is the God that people generally believe in — a God *who has to serve them* (sometimes in very refined ways, say by merely giving them peace of mind). This God does not exist. But the God whom people forget, —the God *whom we all have to serve*—exists and is the prime cause of our existence and of all that we perceive."

In these matters we should be very careful not to state as a fact anything that we are not sure about. To do so will lead us into logical perplexities. We should be careful to base ourselves on what is "necessary and sufficient." To assert that there is a cause from which we receive reason

and conscience, and to call this God, whose voice speaks within us, is to recognise and express a fact of which each conscientious man has had experience. But to go on (as the books of Moses do) and say that God created the heavens and the earth, is to go beyond what I can really know, and exposes me to all sorts of difficulties. As all that I can know about the heavens, the earth, my own brain, and all else that is external to my inner self (which perceives, and approves or disapproves)—is merely the *effect* it has on me and on other creatures like me, it would, in a sense, be truer to say, not that God made the world, but that we made it. So that the old problem: Why did a good God create pain, and sin, and failure? may not be so insoluble after all.

May 1900.



"WHAT IS ART?"

I

AN INTRODUCTION

Tolstoy's book, "What is Art?" appeared in 1898. The following article first appeared in the "Scott Library" edition, published in April 1899.

WHAT thoughtful man has not been perplexed by problems relating to art?

An estimable and charming Russian lady I knew, felt the charm of the music and ritual of the services of the Russo-Greek Church so strongly that she wished the peasants, in whom she was interested, to retain their blind faith, though she herself disbelieved the church doctrines. "Their lives are so poor and bare, they have so little art, so little poetry and colour in their lives—let them at least enjoy what they have; it would be cruel to undeceive them," said she.

A false and antiquated view of life is supported by means of art, and is inseparably linked to some manifestations of art which we enjoy and prize. If the false view of life be destroyed, this art will cease to appear valuable. Is it best to screen the error for the sake of preserving the art? Or should the art be sacrificed for the sake of truthfulness?

Again and again in history a dominant church has utilised art to maintain its sway over men.

Reformers (early Christians, Mohammedans, Puritans, and others) have perceived that art bound people to the old faith, and they were angry with art. They diligently chipped the noses from statues and images, and were wroth with ceremonies, decorations, stained-glass windows and processions. They were even ready to banish art altogether, for, besides the superstitions it upheld, they saw that it depraved and perverted men by dramas, drinking-songs, novels, pictures and dances of a kind that awakened man's lower nature. Yet art always reasserted her sway, and to-day we are told by many that art has nothing to do with morality—that "art should be followed for art's sake."

I went one day, with a lady artist, to the Bodkin Art Gallery, in Moscow. In one of the rooms, on a table, lay a book of coloured pictures, issued in Paris and supplied, I believe, to private subscribers only. The pictures were admirably executed, but represented scenes in the private cabinets of a restaurant. Sexual indulgence was the chief subject of each picture. Women extravagantly dressed and partly undressed; women exposing their legs and breasts to men in evening dress; men and women taking liberties with each other, or dancing the *can-can*, etc., etc. My companion the artist, a maiden lady of irreproachable conduct and reputation, began deliberately to look at these pictures. I could not let my attention dwell on them without ill effects. Such things had a certain attraction for me, and tended to make me restless and nervous. I ventured to suggest that

the subject-matter of the pictures was objectionable. But my companion (who prided herself on being an artist) remarked with conscious superiority, that from an artist's point of view the *subject* was of no consequence. The pictures being very well executed were artistic, and therefore worthy of attention and study. Morality had nothing to do with art.

Here again is a problem. One remembers Plato's advice not to let our thoughts run upon women, for if we do, we shall think clearly about nothing else, and one knows that to neglect this advice is to lose tranquillity of mind; but then one does not wish to be considered narrow, ascetic, or inartistic, nor to lose artistic pleasures which those around us esteem so highly.

Again, the newspapers not long ago printed proposals to construct a Wagner Opera House, to cost, if I recollect rightly, £100,000—about as much as a hundred labourers may earn by fifteen or twenty years' hard work. The writers thought it would be a good thing if such an Opera House were erected and endowed. But I had a talk lately with a man who, till his health failed him, had worked as a builder in London. He told me that when he was younger, he had been very fond of theatre-going, but, later, when he thought things over and considered that in almost every number of his weekly paper he read of cases of people whose death was hastened by lack of good food, he felt it was not right that so much labour should be spent on theatres.

In reply to this view it is urged that food for the mind is as important as food for the body. The labouring classes work to produce food and necessaries for themselves and for the cultured, while some of the cultured class produce plays and operas. It is a division of labour. But this again invites the rejoinder that, sure enough, the labourers produce food for themselves and also food that the cultured class accept and consume; but that the artists seem too often to produce their spiritual food for the cultured only—at any rate a singularly small share seems to reach the country labourers who work to supply the bodily food! Even were the "division of labour" shown to be a fair one, the "division of products" seems remarkably one-sided.

Once again: How is it that often when a new work is produced, neither the critics, the artists, the publishers, nor the public, seem to know whether it is valuable or worthless? Some of the most famous books in English literature could, at first, hardly find a publisher, or were savagely derided by leading critics; while other works once acclaimed as masterpieces are now laughed at or utterly forgotten. A play which nobody now reads was once passed off as a newly-discovered masterpiece of Shakespear's, and was produced at a leading London theatre. Are the critics playing blind-man's buff? Are they relying on each other? Is each following his own whim and fancy? Or do they possess a criterion which they never reveal to those outside the profession?

Such are a few of the many problems relating to art which present themselves to us all, and it is the purpose of Tolstoy's *What is Art?* to enable us to reach such a comprehension of art, and of the position art should occupy in our lives, as will enable us to answer such questions.

The task is one of enormous difficulty. Under the cloak of "art," so much selfish amusement and self-indulgence tries to justify itself, and so many mercenary interests are concerned in preventing the light from shining in upon the subject, that the clamour aroused by this book can only be compared to that raised by the silversmiths of Ephesus when they shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" for about the space of two hours.

Elaborate theories blocked the path with subtle sophistries or ponderous pseudo-erudition. Merely to master these, and expose them, was in itself a colossal labour, necessary in order to clear the road for a statement of any fresh view. To have accomplished this work of exposure in a few chapters is a wonderful achievement. To have done it without making the book intolerably dry is more wonderful still. In Chapter III. (where a rapid summary of some sixty esthetic writers is given) even Tolstoy's powers fail to make the subject interesting, except to the specialist, and he has to plead with his readers "not to be overcome by dulness, but to read these extracts through."

Among the writers mentioned, English readers miss the names of John Ruskin and William

Morris, especially as so much that Tolstoy says, is in accord with their views.

Of Ruskin, Tolstoy has a very high opinion. I have heard him say, "I don't know why you English make such a fuss about Gladstone—you have a much greater man in Ruskin." As a stylist, too, Tolstoy spoke of him with high commendation. Ruskin, however, though he has written on art with profound insight, and has said many things with which Tolstoy fully agrees as well as some things he dissents from, has, I think, nowhere so systematised and summarised his view that it can be readily quoted in the concise way which has enabled Tolstoy to indicate his points of essential agreement with Home, Véron, and Kant. Even the attempt to summarise Kant's esthetic philosophy in a dozen lines will hardly be of much service except to readers who have already some acquaintance with the subject. For those to whom the difference between "subjective" and "objective" perceptions is fresh, a dozen pages would be none too much. And to summarise Ruskin would be perhaps more difficult than to condense Kant.

As to William Morris, we are reminded of his dictum that art is the workman's expression of joy in his work, by Tolstoy's "As soon as the author is not producing art for his own satisfaction,—does not himself feel what he wishes to express,—a resistance immediately springs up" (p. 154); and again, "In such transmission to others of the feelings that have arisen in him, he (the

artist) will find his happiness" (p. 195). Tolstoy sweeps over a far wider range of thought, but he and Morris are not opposed. Morris was emphasising part of what Tolstoy is implying.

But to return to the difficulties of Tolstoy's task. There is one, not yet mentioned, lurking in the hearts of most of us. We have enjoyed works of "art." We have been interested by the information conveyed in a novel, or we have been thrilled by an unexpected "effect"; have admired the exactitude with which real life has been reproduced, or have had our feelings touched by allusions to, or reproductions of, works—old German legends, Greek myths, or Hebrew poetry —which moved us long ago, as they moved generations before us. And we thought all this was "art." Not clearly understanding what art is, and wherein its importance lies, we were not only attached to these things, but attributed importance to them, calling them "artistic" and "beautiful," without well knowing what we meant by those words.

But here is a book that obliges us to clear our minds. It challenges us to define "art" and "beauty," and to say why we consider these things that pleased us, specially important. And as to beauty, we find that the definition given by esthetic writers amounts merely to this, that "Beauty is a kind of pleasure received by us, not having personal advantage for its object." But it follows from this, that "beauty" is a matter of taste, differing among different people; and to

attach special importance to what pleases *me* (and others who have had the same sort of training that I have had) is merely to repeat the old, old mistake which so divides human society: it is like declaring that my race is the best race, my nation the best nation, my church the best church, and my family the "best" family. It indicates ignorance and selfishness.

But "truth angers those whom it does not convince";—people do not wish to understand these things. It seems, at first, as though Tolstóy were obliging us to sacrifice something valuable. We do not realise that we are being helped to select the best art, but we do feel that we are being deprived of our sense of satisfaction in Rudyard Kipling.

Both the magnitude and the difficulty of the task were therefore very great, but they have been surmounted in a marvellous manner. In its construction, in co-ordination in concise form of many converging thoughts, this is, probably, the most masterly of all Tolstoy's works. Of the effect the book has had on me personally, I can only say that "whereas I was blind, now I see." Though sensitive to some forms of art, I was, when I took it up, much in the dark on questions of esthetic philosophy; when I had done with it, I had grasped the main solution of the problem so clearly that—though I waded through nearly all that the critics and reviewers had to say about the book—I never again became perplexed upon the central issues.

Tolstoy was indeed peculiarly qualified for the task he has accomplished. It was after many years of work as a writer of fiction, and when he was already standing in the very foremost rank of European novelists, that he found himself compelled to face, in deadly earnest, the deepest problems of human life. He not only could not go on writing books, but he felt he could not live, unless he found clear guidance, so that he might walk sure-footedly and know the purpose and meaning of his life. Not as a mere question of speculative curiosity, but as a matter of vital necessity, he devoted years to re-discover the truths which underlie all religion.

To fit him for this task he possessed great knowledge of men and books, a wide experience of life, a knowledge of languages, and a freedom from bondage to any authority but that of reason and conscience. He was pinned to no Thirty-nine Articles, and was in receipt of no retaining fee which he was not prepared to sacrifice. Another gift, rare among men of his position, was his wonderful sincerity, and (due, I think, to that sincerity) an amazing power of looking at the phenomena of our complex and artificial life with the eyes of a little child; going straight to the real, obvious facts of the case, and brushing aside the sophistries, the conventionalities, and the "authorities" by which they are obscured.

He commenced the task when he was about fifty years of age, and since then (*i.e.* during the last twent years) he has produced a dozen philo-

sophical or scientific works of first-rate importance,* besides a great many stories and short articles, and finally the novel *Resurrection.*

Among the rest came *The Kreutzer Sonata* with *An Afterword* explaining its purpose. *The Kreutzer Sonata* itself is a story, but the understanding of sexual problems, dealt with explicitly in the *Afterword,* is an integral part of that comprehension of life which causes Tolstoy to admire Christ, Buddha, or Francis of Assisi.

These works treat of the meaning of our life; of the problems raised by the fact that we approve of some things and disapprove of others, and find ourselves deciding which of two courses to pursue.

Religion, Government, Property, Sex, War, and all the relations in which man stands to man, to his own consciousness, and to the ultimate source (which we call God) from whence that consciousness proceeds—are examined with the utmost frankness.

And all this time the problems of Art: What is Art? What importance is due to it? How is it related to the rest of life?—were working in his mind. He was a great artist, often upbraided for having abandoned his art. He, of all men, was bound to clear his thoughts on this perplexing subject, and to express them. His whole philosophy of life—the "religious perception" to which, with such tremendous labour and effort, he had attained, forbade him to detach art

* For a list of these see the article, *Leo Tolstoy*, p. 27 of this book.

from life, and place it in a water-tight compartment where it should not act on life or be re-acted upon by life.

Life to him is rational. It has a clear aim and purpose, discernible by the aid of reason and conscience. And no human activity can be fully understood or rightly appreciated until the central purpose of life is perceived.

You cannot piece together a puzzle-map as long as you keep one bit in a wrong place, but when the pieces all fit together, then you have a demonstration that they are all in their right places. Tolstoy used that simile years ago when explaining how the comprehension of the text, "resist not him that is evil," enabled him to perceive the reasonableness of Christ's teaching, which had long baffled him. So it is with the problem of Art. Wrongly understood, it will tend to confuse and perplex your whole comprehension of life. But given the clue supplied by true "religious perception," and you can place art so that it shall fit in with a right understanding of politics, economics, sex-relationships, science, and all other phases of human activity.

The basis on which the work rests is a perception of the meaning of human life. This was lost sight of by some of the reviewers, who misrepresented what Tolstoy says, and then demonstrated how stupid he would have been had he said what they attributed to him. Leaving his premises and arguments untouched, they dissented from various conclusions—as though it

were all a mere question of taste. But such criticism can lead to nothing. Discussions as to why one man likes pears and another prefers meat, do not help towards finding a definition of what is essential in nourishment; and just so, "the solution of questions of taste in art does not help to make clear what this particular human activity which we call art really consists in."

The object of the following summary of a few main points is to help the reader to avoid pitfalls into which many reviewers have fallen. It aims at being no more than a bare statement of the positions—for more than that, the reader must turn to the book itself.

Let it be granted at the outset, that Tolstoy writes for those who have "ears to hear." He seldom pauses to safeguard himself against the captious critic, and cares little for minute verbal accuracy. For instance, on page 144,* he mentions "Paris," where an English writer (even one who knew to what an extent Paris is the art centre of France, and how many artists flock thither from Russia, America, and all ends of the earth) would have been almost sure to say "France," for fear of being thought to exaggerate. One needs some alertness of mind to follow Tolstoy in his task of compressing so large a subject into so small a space. Moreover, he is an emphatic writer who says what he means, and even, I think, sometimes rather over-emphasises it. With

* The references are valid alike for the "Scott Library" edition and for that issued by the Brotherhood Publishing Company.

this much warning let us proceed to a brief summary of Tolstoy's view of art.

"Art is a human activity," and consequently does not exist for its own sake, but is valuable or objectionable in proportion as it is serviceable or harmful to mankind. The object of this activity is to transmit to others feelings the artist has experienced. Such feelings — intentionally re-evoked and successfully transmitted to others —are the subject-matter of all art. By certain external signs—movements, lines, colours, sounds, or arrangements of words—an artist infects other people so that they share his feelings. Thus "art is a means of union among men, joining them together in the same feelings."

In Chapters II. to V. we have an examination of various theories which have taken art to be something other than this, and step by step we are brought to the conclusion that art is this, and nothing but this.

Having got our definition of art, let us first consider art independently of its subject-matter —*i.e.* without asking whether the feelings transmitted are good, bad, or indifferent. Without adequate expression there is no art, for there is no infection, no transference to others of the author's feeling. The test of art is infection. If an author has moved you so that you feel as he felt, if you are so united to him in feeling, that it seems to you that he has expressed just what you have long wished to express, the work that has so infected you is a work of art.

In this sense, it is true that art has nothing to do with morality; for the test lies in the "infection," and not in any consideration of the goodness or badness of the emotions conveyed. Thus the test of art is an *internal* one. The activity of art is based on the fact that a man, receiving, through his sense of hearing or sight, another man's expression of feeling, is capable of experiencing the emotion that moved the man who expressed it. We all share the same common human nature, and in this sense, at least, are sons of one Father. To take the simplest example: a man laughs, and another, who hears, becomes merry; or a man weeps, and another, who hears, feels sorrow. But note in passing that it does not amount to art "if a man infects others directly, immediately, at the very time he experiences the feeling; if he causes another man to yawn when he himself cannot help yawning," etc. Art begins when some one, *with the object of making others share his feeling*, expresses his feeling by certain external indications.

Normal human beings possess this faculty of being infected by the expression of another man's emotions. For a plain man of unperverted taste, living in contact with nature, with animals, and with his fellow-men — say, for "a country peasant of unperverted taste, this is as easy as it is for an animal of unspoilt scent to follow the trace he needs." And he will know indubitably whether a work presented to him does, or does not unite him in feeling with the author. But

very many people "of our circle" (upper and middle class society) live such unnatural lives, in such conventional relations to the people around them, and in such artificial surroundings, that they have lost "that simple feeling, that sense of infection with another's feeling—compelling us to joy in another's gladness, to sorrow in another's grief, and to mingle souls with another—which is the essence of art." Such people, therefore, have no *inner* test by which to recognise a work of art; and they will always be mistaking other things for art, and seeking for external guides, such as the opinions of "recognised authorities." Or they will mistake for art something that produces a merely physiological effect — lulling or exciting them; or some intellectual puzzle that gives them something to think about.

But if most people of the "cultured crowd" are impervious to true art, is it really possible that a common Russian country peasant, for instance, whose work-days are filled with agricultural labour, and whose brief leisure is largely taken up by his family life and by his participation in the affairs of the village commune—is it possible that *he* can recognise and be touched by works of art? Certainly it is! Just as in ancient Greece crowds assembled to hear the poems of Homer, so to-day in Russia, as in many countries and many ages, the Gospel parables, and much else of the highest art, are gladly heard by the common people. And this does not refer to any superstitious use of the Bible, but to its use as literature.

Not only do normal, labouring country people possess the capacity to be infected by good art—"the epic of Genesis, folk-legends, fairy-tales, folk-songs, etc.," but they themselves produce songs, stories, dances, decorations, etc., which are works of true art. Take as examples the works of Burns or Bunyan, and the peasant women's song mentioned by Tolstoy in Chapter XIV., or some of those melodies produced by the negro slaves on the southern plantations, which have touched, and still touch, many of us with the emotions felt by their unknown and unpaid composers.

The one great quality which makes a work of art truly contagious is its *sincerity*. If an artist is really actuated by a feeling, and is strongly impelled to communicate that feeling to other people—not for money or fame, or anything else, but because he feels he must share it—then he will not be satisfied till he has found a *clear* way of expressing it. And the man who is not borrowing his feelings, but has drawn what he expresses from the depths of his nature, is sure to be *original*, for in the same way that no two people have exactly similar faces or forms, no two people have exactly similar minds or souls.

That in brief outline is what Tolstoy says about art, considered apart from its subject-matter. And this is how certain critics have met it. They say that when Tolstoy says the test of art is *internal*, he must mean that it is *external*. When he says that country peasants have in the past

appreciated, and do still appreciate, works of the highest art, he means that the way to detect a work of art is to see what is apparently most popular among the masses. Go into the streets or music-halls of the cities in any particular country and year, and observe what is most frequently sung, shouted, or played on the barrel-organs. It may happen to be

"Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,"

or,

"We don't want to fight,
But, by Jingo, if we do."

But whatever it is, you may at once declare these songs to be the highest musical art, without even pausing to ask to what they owe their vogue—what actress, or singer, or politician, or wave of patriotic passion has conduced to their popularity. Nor need you consider whether that popularity is not merely temporary and local. Tolstoy has said that works of the highest art are understood by unperverted country peasants—and here are things which are popular with the mob, *ergo*, these things must be the highest art.

The critics then proceed to say that such a test is utterly absurd. And on this point we may agree with the critics.

Some of these writers commence their articles by saying that Tolstoy is a most profound thinker, a great prophet, an intellectual force, etc. Yet when Tolstoy, in his emphatic way, makes the sweeping remark that "good art always pleases every one," the critics do not read on to find out

what he means, but reply: "No! good art does not please every one; some people are colour-blind, and some are deaf, or have no ear for music."

It is as though a man strenuously arguing a point were to say, "Every one knows that two and two make four," and a boy who did not at all see what the speaker was driving at, were to reply: "No, our new-born baby doesn't know it!" It would distract attention from the subject in hand, but it would not elucidate matters.

There is, of course, a verbal contradiction between the statements that "good art always pleases every one" (p. 100), and the remark concerning "people of our circle," who, "with very few exceptions, artists and public and critics, . . . cannot distinguish true works of art from counterfeits, but continually mistake for real art the worst and most artificial" (p. 151). But I venture to think that no unprejudiced and intelligent person reading this book carefully, need fail to reach the author's meaning.

A point to be carefully noted is the distinction between science and art. "Science investigates and brings to human perception such truths and such knowledge as the people of a given time and society consider most important. Art transmits these truths from the region of perception to the region of emotion" (p. 102). Science is an "activity of the understanding which demands preparation and a certain sequence of knowledge, so that one cannot learn trigonometry before knowing geometry." "The business of art," on

the other hand, "lies just in this—to make that understood and felt which, in the form of an argument, might be incomprehensible and inaccessible" (p. 102). It "infects any man, whatever his plane of development," and "the hindrance to understanding the best and highest *feelings* (as is said in the Gospel) does not at all lie in deficiency of development or learning, but, on the contrary, in false development and false learning" (pp. 102, 103). Science and art are frequently blended in one work — *e.g.* in the Gospel elucidation of Christ's comprehension of life, or, to take a modern instance, in Henry George's elucidation of the land question in *Social Problems*.

The class distinction to which Tolstoy repeatedly alludes needs some explanation. The position of the lower classes in England and in Russia is different. In Russia a much larger number of people live on the verge of starvation; the condition of the factory-hands is much worse than in England, and there are many glaring cases of brutal cruelty inflicted on the peasants by the officials, the police, or the military,—but in Russia a far greater proportion of the population live in the country, and a peasant usually has his own house, and tills his share of the communal lands. The "unperverted country peasant" of whom Tolstoy speaks, is a man who perhaps suffers grievous want when there is a bad harvest in his province, but he is a man accustomed to the experiences of a natural life, to the manage-

ment of his own affairs, and to a real voice in the arrangements of the village commune. The Government interferes from time to time, to collect its taxes by force, to take the young men for soldiers, or to maintain the "rights" of the upper classes; but otherwise the peasant is free to do what he sees to be necessary and reasonable. On the other hand, English labourers are, for the most part, not so poor, they have more legal rights, and they have votes; but a far larger number of them live in towns and are engaged in unnatural occupations, while even those that do live in touch with nature are usually mere wage-earners, tilling other men's land, and living often in abject submission to the farmer, the parson, or the lady-bountiful. They are dependent on an employer for daily bread, and the condition of a wage-labourer is as unnatural as that of a landlord.

The tyranny of the St Petersburg bureaucracy is more dramatic but less omnipresent — and probably far less fatal to the capacity to enjoy art — than the tyranny of our respectable, self-satisfied, and property-loving middle-class. I am therefore afraid that we have no great number of "unperverted" country labourers to compare with those of whom Tolstoy speaks, and some of whom I have known personally. But the truth Tolstoy elucidates lies far too deep in human nature to be infringed by such differences of local circumstance. Whatever those circumstances may be, the fact remains that in proportion as a man approaches towards the condition not only of

"earning his subsistence by some kind of labour," but of "living on all its sides the life natural and proper to mankind," his capacity to appreciate true art tends to increase. On the other hand, when a class settles down into an artificial way of life,—loses touch with nature, becomes confused in its perceptions of what is good and what is bad, and prefers the condition of a parasite to that of a producer, — its capacity to appreciate true art must diminish. Losing all clear perception of the meaning of life, such people are necessarily left without any criterion which will enable them to distinguish good from bad art, and they are sure to follow eagerly after beauty, or "that which pleases them."

The artists of our society can usually only reach people of the upper and middle classes. But is the great artist he who delights a select audience of his own day and class, or he whose works link generation to generation and race to race in a common bond of feeling? Surely art should fulfil its purpose as completely as possible. A work of art that united every one with the author, and with one another, would be perfect art. Tolstoy, in his emphatic way, speaks of works of "universal" art, and (though the profound critics hasten to inform us that no work of art ever reached everybody) certainly the more nearly a work of art approaches to such expression of feeling that every one may be infected by it—the nearer (apart from all question of subject-matter) it approaches perfection.

But now as to subject-matter. The subject-matter of art consists of feelings which can be spread from man to man, feelings which are "contagious" or "infectious." Is it of no importance *what* feelings increase and multiply among men?

One man feels that submission to the authority of *his* church, and belief in all that it teaches him, is good; another is embued by a sense of each man's duty to think with his own head—to use for his guidance in life the reason and conscience given to him. One man feels that his nation *ought to* wipe out in blood the shame of a defeat inflicted on her; another feels that we are brothers, sons of one spirit, and that the slaughter of man by man is always wrong. One man feels that the most desirable thing in life is the satisfaction obtainable by the love of women; another man feels that sex-love is an entanglement and a snare, hindering his real work in life. And each of these, if he possess an artist's gift of expression, and if the feeling be really his own and sincere, may infect other men. But some of these feelings will benefit and some will harm mankind, and the more widely they are spread the greater will be their effect.

Art unites men. Surely it is desirable that the feelings in which it unites them should be "the best and highest to which men have risen," or at least should not run contrary to our perception of what makes for the well-being of ourselves and of others. And our perception of what makes

for the well-being of ourselves and of others is what Tolstoy calls our "religious perception."

Therefore the subject-matter of what we, in our day, can esteem as being the best art, can be of two kinds only—

(1) Feelings flowing from the highest perception now attainable by man of our right relation to our neighbour, and to the Source from which we come. Of such art, Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, uniting us in a more vivid sense of compassion and love, is a ready example.

(2) The simple feelings of common life, accessible to every one—provided that they are such as do not hinder progress towards well-being. Art of this kind makes us realise to how great an extent we already are members one of another—sharing the feelings of one common human nature.

The success of a very primitive novel—the story of Joseph, which made its way into the sacred books of the Jews, spread from land to land and from age to age, and continues to be read to-day among people quite free from bibliolatry—shows how nearly "universal" may be the appeal of this kind of art. This branch includes all harmless jokes, folk-stories, nursery rhymes, and even dolls, if only the author or designer has expressed a feeling (tenderness, pleasure, humour, or what not) so as to infect others.

But how are we to know what *are* the "best" feelings? What is good? and what is evil? This is decided by "religious perception." Some such perception exists in every human being; there is

always something he approves of, and something he disapproves of. Reason and conscience are always present, active or latent, as long as man lives. Miss Flora Shaw tells that the most degraded cannibal she ever met, drew the line at eating his own mother—nothing would induce him to entertain the thought, his moral sense was revolted by the suggestion. In most societies the "religious perception," to which they have advanced,—the foremost stage in mankind's long march towards perfection, which has been discerned,—has been clearly expressed by some one, and more or less consciously accepted as an ideal by the many. But there are transition periods in history when the worn-out formularies of a past age have ceased to satisfy men, or have become so incrusted with superstitions that their original brightness is lost. The "religious perception" that is dawning may not yet have found such expression as to be generally understood, but for all that it exists, and shows itself by compelling men to repudiate beliefs that satisfied their forefathers, the outward and visible signs of which are still endowed and dominant long after their spirit has taken refuge in temples not made with hands.

At such times it is difficult for men to understand each other, for the very *words* needed to express the deepest experiences of men's consciousness mean different things to different men. So among us to-day, to many minds *faith* means *credulity*, and *God* suggests a person of the male

sex, father of one only-begotten son, and creator of the universe.

This is why Tolstoy's clear and rational "religious perception," expressed in the books referred to on a previous page, is frequently spoken of by people who have not grasped it, as "mysticism."

The narrow materialist is shocked to find that Tolstoy will not confine himself to the "objective" view of life. Encountering in himself that "inward voice" which compels us all to choose between good and evil, Tolstoy refuses to be diverted from a matter which is of immediate and vital importance to him, by discussions as to the derivation of the external manifestations of conscience which biologists are able to detect in remote forms of life. The mystic,* on the other hand, shrinks from Tolstoy's desire to try all things by the light of reason, to depend on nothing vague, and to accept nothing on authority. The man who does not trust his own reason, fears that life thus squarely faced will prove less worth having than it is when clothed in mist.

In this work, however, Tolstoy does not recapitulate at length what he has said before. He does not pause to re-explain why he condemns Patriotism — *i.e.* each man's preference for the predominance of *his own* country, which leads to the murder of man by man in war; or Churches,

* As the term "mystic" is used in more than one sense in English, I must explain that I use it to denote one who believes in a wisdom "sacredly obscure or secret" (*Chambers's Dictionary*), or "not discriminated or tested by the reason" (*Century Dictionary*). This is the sense in which it would generally be used in foreign languages. And it is the way in which Tolstoy uses the word.

which are sectarian—*i.e.* which, striving to assert that your doxy is heterodoxy, but that *our* doxy is orthodoxy, make external authorities (Popes, Bibles, Councils) supreme, and cling to superstitions (*their own* miracles, legends, and myths), thus separating themselves from communion with the rest of mankind. Nor does he re-explain why he (like Christ) says "pitiable is your plight—ye rich," who live artificial lives, maintainable only by the unbrotherly use of force (police and soldiers), but blessed are ye poor—who, by your way of life, are within easier reach of brotherly conditions, if you will but trust to reason and conscience, and change the direction of your hearts and of your labour, — working no more primarily from fear or greed, but seeking *first* the kingdom of righteousness, in which all good things will be added unto you. He merely summarises it all in a few sentences, defining the "religious perception" of to-day, which alone can decide for us "the degree of importance both of the feelings transmitted by art, and of the information transmitted by science."

"The religious perception of our time, in its widest and most practical application, is the consciousness that our well-being, both material and spiritual, individual and collective, temporal and eternal, lies in the growth of brotherhood among men—in their loving harmony with one another" (p. 159).

And again:

"However differently in form people belonging

to our Christian world may define the destiny of man; whether they see it in human progress in whatever sense of the words, in the union of all men in a socialistic realm, or in the establishment of a commune; whether they look forward to the union of mankind under the guidance of one universal Church, or to the federation of the world,—however various in form their definitions of the destination of human life may be, all men in our times already admit that the highest well-being attainable by men is to be reached by their union with one another" (p. 188).

This is the foundation on which the whole work is based. It follows necessarily from this perception that we should consider as most important in science "investigations into the results of good and bad actions, considerations of the reasonableness or unreasonableness of human institutions and beliefs, considerations of how human life should be lived in order to obtain the greatest well-being for each; as to what one may and should, and what one cannot and should not believe; how to subdue one's passions, and how to acquire the habit of virtue." This is the science that "occupied Moses, Solon, Socrates, Epictetus, Confucius, Mencius, Marcus Aurelius, Spinoza, and all those who have taught men to live a moral life," and it is precisely this kind of scientific investigation to which Tolstoy has devoted most of the last twenty years, and for the sake of which the author of *Resurrection* is often said to have "abandoned art."

Since science, like art, is a "human activity," *that* science best deserves our esteem, best deserves to be "chosen, tolerated, approved, and diffused," which treats of what is supremely important to man; which deals with urgent, vital, inevitable problems of actual life. Such science as this brings "to the consciousness of men the truths that flow from the religious perception of our times," and "indicates the various methods of applying this consciousness to life." "Art should transform this perception into feeling."

Experimental science studies questions of pure curiosity, or things harmful to mankind (such as quick-firing cannon), or technical improvements which in a better state of society would lighten the workers' burden. But, even at its best, such science "cannot serve as a basis for art," for it is occupied with subjects unrelated to human conduct.

Naturally enough, the last chapter of the book deals with the relation between science and art. And the conclusion is that:

"The destiny of art in our time is to transmit from the realm of reason to the realm of feeling the truth that well-being for men consists in being united together, and to set up, in place of the existing reign of force, that kingdom of God—*i.e.* of love—which we all recognise to be the highest aim of human life."

And this art of the future will not be poorer, but far richer, in subject-matter than the art of to-day. From the lullaby — that will delight

millions of people, generation after generation—to the highest religious art, dealing with strong rich, and varied emotions flowing from a fresh outlook upon life and all its problems—the field open for good art is enormous. With so much to say that is urgently important to all, the art of the future will, in matter of form also, be far superior to our art in "clearness, beauty, simplicity, and compression" (p. 194).

For beauty (*i.e.* "that which pleases")—though it depends on taste, and can furnish no *criterion* for art—will be a natural characteristic of work done, not for hire, nor even for fame, but because men, living a natural and healthy life, wish to share the "highest spiritual strength which passes through them," with the greatest possible number of others. The feelings such an artist wishes to share, he will transmit in a way that will please him, and will please other men who share his nature.

Morality is in the nature of things—we cannot escape it.

In a society where each man sets himself to obtain wealth, the difficulty of obtaining an honest living tends to become greater and greater. The more keenly a society pants to obtain "that which pleases," and puts this forward as the first and great consideration, the more puerile and worthless will their art become. But in a society which sought, primarily, for right relations between its members, an abundance would be obtainable for all; and when "religious perception" guides

a people's art — beauty inevitably results, as has always been the case when men have seized a fresh perception of life and of its purpose.

An illustration which Tolstoy struck out of the work while it was being printed, may serve to illustrate how, with the aid of the principles explained above, we may judge of the merits of any work professing to be art.

Take *Romeo and Juliet*. The conventional view is that Shakespear is the greatest of artists, and that *Romeo and Juliet* is one of his good plays. Why this is so nobody can tell you. It is so: that is the way certain people feel about it. They are "the authorities," and to doubt their dictum is to show that you know nothing about art. Tolstoy does not agree with them in their estimate of Shakespear, therefore Tolstoy is wrong!

But now let us apply Tolstoy's view of art to *Romeo and Juliet*. He does not deny that it infects. "Let us admit that it is a work of art, that it infects (though it is so artificial that it can infect only those who have been carefully educated thereunto); but what are the feelings it transmits?"

That is to say, judging by the *internal* test, Tolstoy admits that *Romeo and Juliet* unites him to its author and to other people in feeling. But the work is very far from being one of "universal" art—only a small minority of people ever have cared, or ever will care, for it. Even in England, or even in the layer of European society

it is best adapted to reach, it only touches a minority, and does not approach the universality attained by the story of Joseph and many pieces of folk-lore.

But perhaps the subject-matter, the *feeling* with which *Romeo and Juliet* infects those whom it does reach, lifts it into the class of the highest religious art? Not so. The feeling is that of the attractiveness of "love at first sight." A girl fourteen years old, and a young man, meet at an aristocratic party, where there is feasting and pleasure and idleness, and, without knowing each other's minds, they fall in love as the birds and beasts do. If any feeling is transmitted to us, it is the feeling that there *is* a pleasure in these things. Somewhere, in most natures, there dwells, dominant or dormant, an inclination to let such physical sexual attraction guide our course in life. To give it a plain name, it is "sensuality." "How can I, father or mother of a daughter of Juliet's age, wish that those foul feelings which the play transmits should be communicated to my daughter? And if the feelings transmitted by the play are bad, how can I call it good in subject-matter?"

But, objects a friend, the *moral* of *Romeo and Juliet* is excellent. See what disasters followed from the physical "love at first sight." But that is quite another matter. It is the feelings with which you are infected when reading, and not any moral you can deduce, that is subject-matter of art. Pondering upon the consequences that

flow from Romeo and Juliet's behaviour may belong to the domain of moral science, but not to that of art.

I have hesitated to use an illustration Tolstoy had struck out, but I think it serves its purpose. No doubt there are other, subordinate, feelings (*e.g.* humour) to be found in *Romeo and Juliet*; but much in Shakespear that has been highly esteemed, and that occupies our brains, does not come under Tolstoy's definition of art because, however ingenious the reflections evoked may be, it is thought and not feeling that is dealt with.

Tried by such tests, the enormous majority of the things we have been taught to consider great works of art are found wanting. Either they fail to infect (and attract merely by being interesting, realistic, effectful, or by borrowing from others), and are therefore not works of art at all; or they are works of "exclusive art," bad in form and capable of infecting only a select audience trained and habituated to such inferior art; or they are bad in subject-matter, transmitting feelings harmful to mankind.

But strive as we may to be clear and explicit, our approval and disapproval is a matter of degree. The thought which underlay the remark: "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, even God," applies not to man only, but to all things human.

Tolstoy does not shrink from condemning his own artistic productions; with the exception of two short stories, he tells us, they are works of

bad art. Take, for instance, the novel *Resurrection*, of which he has, somewhere, spoken disparagingly, as being "written in my former style," and being therefore bad art.* What does this mean? The book is a masterpiece in its own line; it undoubtedly infects many people, and the feelings transmitted are, in the main, such as Tolstoy approves of—in fact, they are the feelings to which his religious perception has brought him. If lust is felt in one chapter, the reaction follows as inevitably as in real life, and is transmitted with great artistic power. Tolstoy approves of treating all the problems of life, including the sex-question, quite plainly and explicitly. To guide us in life we need, not ignorance nor evasion of facts, but soundness of religious perception, clearness of thought, and a right direction and development of feeling.

In subject-matter, then, *Resurrection* is as clearly a work of religious art as any novel mentioned by Tolstoy in Chapter XVI. of *What is Art?* And with regard to the manner in which the matter is presented, I think it may safely be said that in "clearness" as well as in "simplicity and compression," it stands easily first among Tolstoy's novels. Of its "individuality and sincerity," to say that it equals his former works is to say that it is unsurpassed in those qualities by any novel we possess.

* The remark quoted above referred rather to the book as it was originally written, than to the work which has now reached the public, for Tolstoy, to a very large extent, re-wrote it while it was passing through the press.

Why the work does not fully satisfy Tolstoy is, I think, because it is a work of "exclusive art," laden with details of time and place. "Simplicity and compression" it possesses, but not in the degree required from works of "universal" art. It is a novel, appealing mainly to the class that has leisure for novel-reading because it neglects to produce its own food, make its own clothes, or build its own houses. But if these considerations apply to *Resurrection*, they apply, with at least equal force, to all the best novels extant. If Tolstoy is sometimes severe on others, he is at least as severe on himself, and to enable us to discern the comparative merits of different works of art, his principles can be applied by men less exacting than himself.

There is one defect in Tolstoy's writings in general, which needs to be noted. It is observable in his novels, but it is more serious in his essays and in his philosophical works. He does not write a style easy to read. He seems to expect a greater amount of strenuous co-operation from his readers than can safely be looked for from the ordinary man. His sentences are often long, sometimes extremely involved, and occasionally they are even faulty in construction. The strenuous labour he puts into his work all goes to elucidate his perception of the matter, and the sequence of the ideas. For the mere phraseology he seems to trust to his great power of expression, and to have an equal disinclination to polish it on a final revision as when writing

the first rough draft. He will re-shape an article again and again if the thoughts expressed do not satisfy him. But he will, sometimes, leave a careless sentence uncorrected, which may baffle many an unwary reader. He certainly cares nothing at all for the elegant verbosity so highly prized by writers who, having nothing particular to express, attach supreme importance to their power of expression. But his readers have occasionally—especially in such a book as *On Life*—to pay for his indifference.

What is Art? itself is a work of science, though many passages, and even some whole chapters, appeal to us as works of art and we feel the contagion of the author's hope, his anxiety to serve the cause of truth and love, his indignation (sometimes rather sharply expressed) with whatever blocks the path of advance, and his contempt for much that the "cultured crowd," in our erudite, perverted society, have persuaded themselves, and would fain persuade others, is the highest art.

One result which follows inevitably from Tolstoy's view (and which illustrates how widely his views differ from the fashionable esthetic mysticism), is that art is not stationary but progressive. It is true that our highest religious perception found expression eighteen hundred years ago, and then served as the basis of an art which is still unmatched; and similar cases can be instanced from the farther East. But allowing for such great exceptions,—to which, not

inaptly, the term of "inspiration" has been specially applied,—the subject-matter of art improves, though long periods of time may have to be considered in order to make this obvious. Our power of verbal expression, for instance, may now be no better than it was in the days of David, but we must no longer esteem as good *in subject-matter* poems which appeal to the Eternal to destroy a man's private or national foes; for we have reached a "religious perception" which bids us have no foes, and the ultimate source (undefinable by us) from which this consciousness has come, is what we mean when we speak of God.

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II

CRITICISMS OF TOLSTOY'S THEORY

The following article appeared in the *Contemporary Review* (August 1900) in reply to one published in the *Quarterly Review* of the previous April.

THE forefathers of the Scribes and Pharisees of old stoned the prophets, and in more recent days so respectable an organ as *The Times* has spoken with intolerance of men as estimable as Macaulay, Cobden, Bright, or Abraham Lincoln. History and experience alike show how difficult it is to treat with fairness the prominent exponents of views we do not share.

A striking instance of this is furnished by the palpable unfairness of certain recent attacks on the philosophical writings of Leo Tolstoy, a man whose views deserve, at least, serious examination.

Tolstoy has had very great difficulty in presenting his opinions (especially his religious and philosophic opinions) to the world. Several of his books are totally prohibited in Russia; when printed in Russian at Geneva they were most carelessly edited, and, missing the attention Tolstoy usually devotes to his proof-sheets, they contain errors that have proved a stumbling-block to translators. Other works of his, permitted in Russia,

were tampered with by the Censor, who struck out what Tolstoy wrote, and, worse still, sometimes inserted words of his own.

But for non-Russian readers the heaviest blow to Tolstoy's reputation as a clear and sane thinker, was struck, not by Censor, or by editor, but by translators who, if perhaps capable of dealing with his stories, were incompetent to render his philosophy. Versions of his most serious work appeared containing much absolute nonsense. A comparison with the original shows that the usual Russian double negative was sometimes mistaken for the affirmative, and that the translations contained other almost incredible blunders. They appeared at a time when readers, surprised that a novelist should attempt philosophical work, were wondering whether they ought to take Tolstoy seriously in his new *rôle*; and they caused many people to conclude that, as a philosopher, Tolstoy must not be taken seriously. Such a prejudice, once created, is not easily broken down, and his subsequent works have not received the serious study they deserve.

A man who has spoken the truth as he saw it, under constant risk of persecution; who has had his works suppressed or mutilated at home, and badly edited abroad; who has been translated so that he has appeared to assert what he wished to deny,—such a man surely has a special claim to scrupulously fair treatment at the hands of his reviewers. But to show that this claim is not always recognised, it will only be necessary to in-

stance the reception accorded by certain critics to the Count's last philosophical work, *What is Art?*

Tolstoy's novels and stories, with the solitary exception of the *Kreutzer Sonata*, have been very well received. It is no mean tribute to his power of infecting his reader with his own feelings, that though his last novel, *Resurrection*, indicts fundamental principles of civil and criminal law in the validity of which most men still firmly believe, it has yet been welcomed with enthusiasm by a considerable part of the Press, and passed over in almost absolute silence by the rest. Of attack on the book there has been next to none. In fact, since Matthew Arnold and William Dean Howells commended him to English readers, Tolstoy's rank among the very foremost writers of fiction has not been seriously called in question. His philosophical and scientific works, treating of human conduct, activities, institutions, and beliefs, have had a different fate, but even they have met with some cordial appreciation. For instance, Mr A. B. Walkley welcomed *What is Art?* in a series of interesting articles in the *Star*, and declared that "this calmly and cogently reasoned effort to put art on a new basis is a literary event of the first importance." Another appreciative review of the same work was Mr G. Bernard Shaw's in the *Daily Chronicle*. The opening sentence—

> "This book is a most effective booby trap. It is written with so utter a contempt for

> the objections which the routine critic is sure to allege against it, that many a dilettantist reviewer has already accepted it as a butt set up by Providence . . ."

precisely hit off one aspect of the matter.

Many of the reviewers abstained entirely from explaining Tolstoy's views, and contented themselves with denunciation.

For example, a leading article in *Literature* (30th July 1898) accorded to the author of such "clotted nonsense," "distinction among æsthetic circle-squarers." After stating that "there never was any reason for inferring . . . that Count Tolstoi's opinions on the philosophy of art would be worth the paper on which they are written"; and that the expounder of these "fantastic doctrines surpasses all other advocates of this same theory in perverse unreason," the writer proceeds with an examination of "the melancholy case of the eminent Russian novelist," and tells us that

> "the notion of turning for guidance to a Russian man of letters of whom all we know, outside his literary record, is that he has embraced Socialism on much the same grounds of conviction as a Sunday afternoon listener to a Hyde Park orator, and 'found religion' in much the same spirit as one of the 'Hallelujah lasses' of the Salvation Army, is on the face of it absurd. Nobody, however

> eminent as a novelist, . . . has any business to invite his fellow-men to step with him outside the region of sanity . . . and sit down beside him like Alice beside the Hatter or the March Hare for the solemn examination of so lunatic a thesis as this."

All this is somewhat bewildering to those who have read *What is Art?* and understood it; but light is thrown upon the real state of the case by the following sentence from the same article: "We respectfully but firmly decline his proposal that we should study his opinions."

The respect is not very obvious, but the frankness of the writer's admission that he will not study the views he is denouncing is all that could be desired. It had cost Tolstoy fifteen years of effort to produce and clarify his thesis. But as there are none so deaf as those who won't hear, we may well believe that a man who would not study it, did not understand it.

To tell the simple truth, Tolstoy had said much that was new and startling, but that could not be quickly digested; and he had expressed it in such a caustic manner, had been so severe on critics, specialists, professional artists, and art schools, as well as on whole groups of other people, from spiritualists to scientists, and on fifty or more well-known living people into the bargain; had, in fact, hit so freely and so hard, that counter-attacks of considerable asperity were inevitable. It was only natural that people

whose cherished beliefs were ruthlessly trampled under foot should resist with all their might. But were their blows effective, or did they merely beat the air? In order to answer this question it will be necessary to take a representative criticism and examine it with some care. It would be hardly fair to take for this purpose one of the reviews that appeared while the book was still new.* It is true that one of the earliest reviewers hailed it as being "the most important essay in pure criticism of recent years, and destined to become a classic," but most of the critics at that time had not begun to realise this importance. Let us therefore rather take the latest review, the one that appeared in the April 1900 number of the *Quarterly Review*. It is entitled *Tolstoi's Views of Art*.

First, however, it will be well to sketch in bare outline the main position taken up by Tolstoy. This is the more necessary as it is a task generally neglected by the reviewers.

No department of science, as Véron justly remarks, has been more generally abandoned to the dreams of the metaphysicians than esthetic philosophy. The task Tolstoy has undertaken is

* The first complete edition approved of by Tolstoy was the English version issued by the Brotherhood Publishing Company about Midsummer 1898. The cheaper edition subsequently published by Walter Scott (in the Scott Library series) is printed from the same type and differs only in its get up, and by the omission of the author's portrait and of the index which the Brotherhood Publishing Company's fourth edition contains. The pages quoted in this article refer to either edition.

to clear up "the frightful obscurity which reigns in this region of speculation."

What is Art? Its manifestations are "bounded on one side by the practically useful and on the other by unsuccessful attempts at art." But what working definition of Art is there, that would enable us to feel sure that this or that production of human activity is a work of art? The answer at first seems very simple to those "who talk without thinking." They are accustomed to say that "Art is such activity as produces beauty." But this only shifts the matter a step. We have now to ask for a working definition of beauty, and on careful examination we find that this has nowhere been given. Every attempt to define beauty *objectively*, as consisting "either in utility, or in adjustment to a purpose, or in symmetry, or in order, or in proportion, or in smoothness, or in harmony of the parts, or in unity amid variety, or in various combinations of these" (p. 38), has broken down utterly, and we have nothing left but a *subjective* definition which amounts to this, that beauty is "that which pleases us" without evoking in us desire. In other words, "Beauty is simply a certain kind of disinterested pleasure received by us." This seems clear enough, but unfortunately it is inexact, and can be widened out so as to include the pleasure derived from drink, from food, from touching a delicate skin, etc., as is done by Guyau, Kralik, and other estheticians.

The yet more serious trouble is, that different

things please different people. Instead of getting a solid basis for a science we get landed in confusion arising from the fact that tastes differ. If we use the word *beauty* in our definition of art, and if beauty means "that which pleases," and if different things please different people—our definition is useless. One man will say a certain thing is a work of art because it pleases him, another will reply that it is not a work of art because he does not like it.

And this is precisely what has happened and is happening. Is Walt Whitman a great poet? Yes, says A., he is, because I like his poems and agree with them. No, says B., he is not, because I don't like his poems and disagree with them.

Thus the science of esthetics has as yet failed to get even a start. It has not told us what art is, still less has it enabled us to judge of the quality of art. "So that the whole existing science of esthetics fails to do what we might expect from it, being a mental activity calling itself a science, namely, it does not define the qualities and laws of art, or of the beautiful (if that be the content of art), or the nature of taste (if taste decides the question of art and its merit), and then, on the basis of such definitions, acknowledge as art those productions which correspond to these laws, and reject those which do not come under them. But this science of esthetics consists in first acknowledging a certain set of productions to be art (because they please us), and then framing such a theory of art that all those pro-

ductions which please a certain circle of people should fit into it" (p. 41).

Such being the case, reasonable men should be not merely ready, but anxious, to avoid the use of the word beauty in framing their definition of art, and should select words which mean the same thing to each of us who uses them. Yet, strange to say, the estheticians, the specialists, and the "cultured crowd" cling tenaciously, and even fanatically, to the use of a word which they cannot define in a serviceable manner. They are as angry with anyone who protests against its use in a scientific definition as the Scarboro' roughs * are with a Quaker who says that men ought not to kill each other.

"As is always the case, the more cloudy and confused the conception conveyed by a word, with the more *aplomb* and self-assurance do people use that word, pretending that what is understood by it is so simple and clear that it is not worth while even to discuss what it actually means. This is how matters of orthodox religion are usually dealt with, and this is how people now deal with the conception of beauty" (p. 14).

For his part, Tolstoy prefers to understand, and to let other people understand, what he means by the words he uses, and he has therefore framed a definition of art which avoids all obscurity.

"*Art is a human activity, consisting in this, that*

* Written soon after the Rowntrees' had been attacked by a patriotic mob, whose feelings were harrowed by an attempt to hold a peace-meeting.

one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings, and also experience them" (p. 50).

Art is possible because we share one common human nature. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin. All who are capable of experiencing "that simple feeling familiar to the plainest man and even to a child, that sense of infection with another's feeling—compelling us to joy in another's gladness, to sorrow at another's grief, and to mingle souls with another" (p. 151), possess the mental and emotional telegraph wires along which an artist's influence may pass.

A common crowd may be swayed by an orator, but not by the ablest mathematical lecturer; for, whereas *thoughts* can only be transferred to minds sufficiently prepared to receive them, the *feelings* that are the birthright of our common humanity are shared by all normal people. When an orator fails to sway his audience, we say the orator has failed—not the audience. But when a boy fails to understand the 5th proposition because he has not understood those that preceded it, we do not say that Euclid has failed—but that the boy has not understood him. Science is a human activity, transmitting thoughts from man to man: Art is a human activity, transmitting feelings. They have some features in common. Clearness, simplicity, and compression are desirable in both, and the same book, or the same speech, may contain both science and art; but there is a

fundamental difference, though both alike are "indispensable means of communication, without which mankind could not exist" (pp. 52 and 200).

Before passing from definitions to deductions based on them, reference should be made to the physiological evolutionary definition of Schiller, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer, which Tolstoy sums up thus: "Art is an activity, arising even in the animal kingdom, and 'springing from sexual desire and the propensity to play'" (p. 46). This, though superior to the definitions which depend on the conception of beauty, "is inexact because, instead of speaking about the artistic activity itself, which is the real matter in hand, it treats of the *derivation* of art" (p. 46).

Accepting Tolstoy's definition of art, we at once see that art covers a much wider ground than we have been accustomed to suppose.

"We are accustomed to understand art to be only what we hear and see in theatres, concerts, and exhibitions; together with buildings, statues, poems, novels. . . . But all this is but the smallest part of the art by which we communicate with each other in life. All human life is filled with works of art of every kind — from cradle-song, jest, mimicry, the ornamentation of houses, dress, and utensils, up to church services, buildings, monuments, and triumphal processions. It is all artistic activity" (p. 51).

But we generally use the word in a special and restricted sense to mean, not all human activity that deliberately and with premeditation transmits

feelings, "but only that part which we for some reason select from it and to which we attach special importance" (p. 51).

Before considering what kind of art deserves to be thus specially selected for our highest esteem, we must clearly distinguish between two different things: (1) the subject-matter of art, and (2) the form of art apart from its subject-matter. This distinction is fundamentally important, and as soon as it is made, the vexed question of the relation of art to morality solves itself easily and inevitably.

Let us take art apart from its subject-matter first.

"There is one indubitable indication distinguishing real art from its counterfeit—namely, the *infectiousness* of art. If a man, without exercising effort, and without altering his standpoint, on reading, hearing, or seeing another man's work, experiences a mental condition which *unites* him with that man and with other people who also partake of that work of art, then the object evoking that condition is a work of art" (p. 152).

"And not only is infection a sure sign of art, but the degree of infectiousness is also the sole measure of excellence in art."

"*The stronger the infection the better is the art, as art*, speaking now apart from its subject-matter. —*i.e.* not considering the quality of the feelings it transmits" (p. 153).

From this point of view, art has really nothing to do with morality. The feelings transmitted

may be good or bad feelings, and may produce the best or the worst results on those who are influenced by them. Yet, in either case, the man who transmits them is an artist.

"The feelings with which the artist infects others may be most various—very strong or very weak, very important or very insignificant, very bad or very good: feelings of love for native land, self-devotion and submission to fate or to God expressed in a drama, raptures of lovers described in a novel, feelings of voluptuousness expressed in a picture, courage expressed in a triumphal march, merriment evoked by a dance, humour evoked by a funny story, the feeling of quietness transmitted by an evening landscape or by a lullaby, or the feeling of admiration evoked by a beautiful arabesque—it is all art" (p. 49).

If you have not lost the capacity—usually possessed by people leading a sane and natural life—to share the feelings expressed by others, you may try the quality of a production first of all by this internal test: Does it unite you in feeling with its author and with others who share the same infection? Only if it does this, have *you* any right to testify to its being a work of art.

If you are infected by the work, and are, therefore, sure that it is a work of art, the next question is whether it is a weak work of "exclusive art," or a great work of "universal" art. It may influence you—who have, perhaps, been specially trained and accustomed to that kind of art, or who share the prepossessions of the artist, and belong to his set,

class, school, sect, or race—but is it capable of influencing men of other classes, races, and ages? Here the primary *internal* test is supplemented by an *external* one. There are works of "universal art" (using the word, of course, in a comparative and not in an absolute sense). The *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the story of *Joseph*, the *Psalms*, the Gospel parables, the story of *Sakya Muni*, the hymns of the *Vedas*, the best folk-legends, fairy-tales, and folk-songs are understood by all. If only they are adequately rendered, and are received not superstitiously but with an open mind, they are "quite comprehensible now to us, educated or uneducated, as they were comprehensible to the men of those times, long ago, who were even less educated than our labourers" (pp. 102-103).

Even a strictly national art, such as Japanese decorative art, may be admirable and "universal." "The *feeling* (of admiration at, and delight in, the combination of lines and colours) which the artist has experienced, and with which he infects the spectator" (p. 171), may be so sincere that it acts on men of other races without demanding from them any laborious preparation before they can enjoy it.

When we find ourselves admiring "exclusive art," we must beware of flattering ourselves with the supposition that great masses of people do not like what *we* consider undoubtedly good, because *they* are not sufficiently developed, while *we* are very superior people. Perhaps we admire

and enjoy these things not because they are very good, but merely because we have trained ourselves to admire them — and have got into the habit of doing so. But "people may habituate themselves to anything, even to the very worst things. As people may habituate themselves to bad food, to spirits, tobacco, and opium, just in the same way they may habituate themselves to bad art—and that is exactly what is being done" (p. 101).

Nor should we let our self-sufficiency blind us to the obvious lesson of history: "we know that the majority of the productions of the art of the upper classes, such as various odes, poems, dramas, cantatas, pastorals, pictures, etc., which delighted the people of the upper classes when they were produced, never were afterwards either understood or valued by the great masses of mankind, but have remained, what they were at first, a mere pastime for rich people of their time, for whom alone they ever were of any importance" (pp. 70-71).

"Art is a human activity," and, consequently, does not exist for its own sake, but is valuable or objectionable in proportion to the benefit or the harm it brings to mankind. Its subject-matter consists of feelings which are *contagious* or *infectious—i.e.* which can spread from man to man. Is it not supremely important what feelings spread among us?

From this point of view the connection between morality and art is intimate and inevitable. It

is a fact of human life from which we can no more escape than we can from gravitation.

Art unites men; and the better the feelings in which it unites them the better it will be for humanity.

But which are the best and highest feelings? How are we to discern or to define them? They have differed, and men's definition of them has differed, from age to age; but, as Tolstoy explains, each age has had its dominant view of life, which we may call its "religious perception." Humanity progresses, and our view of life, our "religious perception," is in many things different from that, say, of the ancient Greeks. In relation, *not to the forms of art, but to its subject-matter*, it would be a mistake to suppose "that the very best that can be done by the art of nations after 1900 years of Christian teaching, is to choose as the ideal of their life the ideal that was held by a small, semi-savage, slave-holding people who lived 2000 years ago, who imitated the nude human body extremely well, and erected buildings pleasant to look at" (p. 65).

And Tolstoy having begun by giving us his definition of art concludes by giving us a statement of the view of life he has accepted, and which he believes is influencing us all whether we know it or not. It is, he says, the real meaning of Christ's teaching.

"That meaning has not only become accessible to all men of our times, but the whole life of man to-day is permeated by the spirit of that teaching,

and consciously or unconsciously, is guided by it" (p. 188).

"The religious perception of our time, in its widest and most practical application, is the consciousness that our well-being, both material and spiritual, individual and collective, temporal and eternal, lies in the growth of brotherhood among all men — in their loving harmony with one another" (p. 159).

And whether we accept that view of life or some other, it is certain that the view we hold will influence our approval or disapproval of the various feelings transmitted by art.

Accepting Tolstoy's standpoint, we should allow the highest honour to "positive feelings of love to God and one's neighbour, and negative feelings of indignation and horror at the violation of love"; but the realm of subject-matter for good art includes much more than that.

"The artist of the future will understand that to compose a fairy-tale, a little song which will touch, a lullaby or a riddle which will entertain, a jest which will amuse, or to draw a sketch which will delight dozens of generations or millions of children and adults, is incomparably more important and more fruitful than to compose a novel or a symphony or paint a picture, which will divert some members of the wealthy classes for a short time, and then for ever be forgotten. The region of this art of the simple feelings accessible to all is enormous, and it is as yet almost untouched" (p. 197).

The artist should know that this art of the simple feelings of common life, like the highest religious art, tends to unite us all and to exclude none.

"Sometimes people who are together are, if not hostile to one another, at least estranged in mood and feeling, till, perchance, a story, a performance, a picture, or even a building, but oftenest of all, music, unites them all as by an electric flash, and, in place of their former isolation or even enmity, they are all conscious of union and mutual love. Each is glad that another feels what he feels; glad of the communion established, not only between him and all present, but also with all now living who will yet share the same impression; and more than that, he feels the mysterious gladness of a communion which, reaching beyond the grave, unites us with all men of the past who have been moved by the same feelings, and with all men of the future who will yet be touched by them" (p. 165).

Thus, apart from subject-matter, the best art is that which best accomplishes its purpose of infecting others with the feelings the artist wishes to impart. And the best subject-matter is that which, directly or indirectly, tends to forward brotherly union among all men.

The good art of the future should be superior to our present art in "clearness, beauty, simplicity, and compression," for one penalty of forgetting the primary aim of art is that we greatly lose that which is a natural accompaniment of art—

the pleasure given by beauty. We are like men who, living to eat, eventually lose even the natural pleasure food affords to those who eat to live.

Such, in brief outline, are Tolstoy's essential views of art. Even so bare and incomplete a recapitulation, stripped as it is of the convincing arguments, the brilliant examples, and the masterly support and elucidation which are crammed into the 237 pages of this marvellous book — may suffice to show that it is a work deserving study rather than abuse. To some men it seems so obviously and fundamentally true, that they teach it in Sunday Schools, and talk about it at Pleasant Sunday Afternoons; others (who, from their tone of authority, must be men of the highest ability) tell us it is "clotted nonsense" and "confusion worse confounded." The only way is to read the book for oneself, just as men flee to the Gospels to escape the commentators.

Now that we have seen what the book is about, it will not take long to review the *Quarterly Reviewer's* article. He begins, as is customary, by telling us that Tolstoy is a prophet, and then (as is also customary) he proceeds to attribute to him views that could only come—as Diavolo put it—from "a sort of prophet to whom God does not speak."

But we must beware of taking the reviewer too seriously. It is told of an Irish member that he once palmed off some sentences of gibberish

on the House of Commons, pretending they were a Greek quotation; and I am half inclined to suspect we have before us in this review a yet more elaborate and audacious hoax. The grounds for my suspicion are, that the reviewer ignores the definition of art on which the work is based; ignores the view of life essential to its comprehension; misquotes Tolstoy four times (using inverted commas), building attacks on the basis of his own blunders; imputes to Tolstoy absurd opinions; re-states fallacies Tolstoy had exposed, and then says "such facts and principles as these have never occurred to Tolstoi'; ignores the English version of *What is Art?* of which version Tolstoy wrote: "I request all who are interested in my views on art only to judge of them by the work in its present shape"; and finally he mis-spells Tolstoy's name.*

By treading in the steps of previous reviewers, and adding here and there a slight touch of exaggeration, he exposes the futility of their criticisms. And I should have no hesitation in welcoming the *Quarterly Reviewer* as a valuable ally, were it not for these words of Tolstoy (who is truly a prophet):

"I know that most men—not only those considered clever, but even those who are very

* It almost looks as if the outward and visible sign adopted by a large part of our Press to indicate their ignorance of Leo Tolstoy—is to mis-spell his name. In French there is some excuse for spelling the name Tolstoï, but what excuse is there in English for not spelling it as Tolstoy does? His autograph is reproduced in the Brotherhood Publishing Company's edition of *What is Art?*

clever and capable of understanding most difficult scientific, mathematical, or philosophic problems —can very seldom discern even the simplest and most obvious truth if it be such as to oblige them to admit the falsity of conclusions they have formed, perhaps with much difficulty—conclusions of which they are proud, which they have taught to others, and on which they have built their lives. And therefore I have little hope that what I adduce as to the perversion of art and taste in our society will be accepted or even seriously considered" (p. 143).

It would need a long article fully to expose the mistakes of the review, and I will here merely produce evidence enough to show that my indictment is not made without cause.

Of the misquotations, here is a single instance:—

> "The majority of men has always understood all that we consider as the highest art: the *Book of Genesis*, etc.,"

quotes the reviewer, and proceeds to speak of the incomprehensibility of *the opening chapters* of Genesis to many people. But what Tolstoy really said was: "The majority always have understood, and still understand, what we also recognise as being the very best art: the *epic* of Genesis, etc." (p. 101)—*i.e.* the *story part* of Genesis, especially the story of Joseph, to which Tolstoy particularly refers.

Of opinions wrongly attributed to Tolstoy I will

also give but one out of many. The review ends "*despite Tolstoi's statement to the contrary*, art . . . is necessary to mankind's full and harmonious life."

In the very book under review, Tolstoy wrote: "Art is . . . indispensable for the life and progress towards well-being of individuals and of humanity" (p. 50).

In defence of some of his mistakes, the *Quarterly Reviewer* may plead that he did not kno[w] the authoritative version of the book [is] English one, and that he relied on a translation. But, as already explained, th[is] what he had no business to do. The v[ersion] has used is, in parts, unreliable, and [he] has recently stated that he is not a [critic] "either by taste or profession." The [re]reviewer's sincerity is, in this case, a v[ery] one. If he has erred by inadvertenc[e] an explanation to the author he has [to be] sented, and to the readers he has misle[d].

The article does not lack humour, c[ertainly] unconscious. Beauty is adopted as th[e test] of art, and in sentences which combine a [maze] of involution with a minimum of sense, the reviewer, with great show of erudition, explains that it is difficult and "in the present backward state of esthetic science, perhaps, impossible, to define" what the word *beauty* means. But "the progress of science will one day explain" it, as being a desirable thing causing pleasure.

Tolstoy had said: "The acknowledgment of

beauty (*i.e.* of a certain kind of pleasure received from art) as being the aim of art, not only fails to assist us in finding a definition of what art is, but, on the contrary, by transferring the question into a region quite foreign to art (into metaphysical, psychological, physiological, and even historical discussions as to why such a production pleases one person, and such another displeases [illegible] pleases someone else), it renders such definition [illegible]ble" (p. 44). So that it comes to this: [illegible]ays: We must keep to words we under- [illegible]His critic replies (if he means anything [illegible]d is not merely poking fun at us) that [illegible]use words we don't understand, because [illegible]ress of science" will enable our grand- [illegible] understand them!

[illegible] the same trick a second time, with, I [illegible]sly laugh at those applications, which [illegible]mon to-day, of evolutionary science to [illegible]f human conduct. For once he agrees [illegible]oy. Most of what in our society is "is in our days largely artificial, often [illegible]me, always difficult of appreciation, and, [illegible]a luxury: . . . it is mere nonsense and cant to talk of the usefulness of" (such) "art to mankind as a whole, and the only sincere statement is that of the cynical and immoral persons who calmly admit that art is one of the many luxuries of the rich and leisured minority, and maintained for their sole enjoyment." The conclusion evidently should be that, as what we are accustomed to call "art" is in such a bad way—we must try

to understand the malady, in order that we may not hinder but help the substitution for all that is bad in our present art, of a more genuine, wholesome, and true art, based on a real understanding of the purpose of our life. But the reviewer escapes from this conclusion as easily as the juggler escapes from the corded box. We, forsooth, need not alter our views or our habits; self-acting evolution will do all that is necessary for us.

"We would explain," says the reviewer, "not to Tolstoi, for whom all scientific explanations are mere lumber, but to those readers of Tolstoi whom his arguments may have shaken, first that the present state of things" (like everything else) "has had antecedent causes, and, secondly, that these wrong conditions cannot fail to right themselves." "In what precise manner this may take place it would be presumptuous to forecast," and, therefore, the reviewer assures us, it is not selfishness to "foster the art of the present" (*i.e.* the art which the reviewer has just agreed in condemning) for the sake of the future.

Truly this review helps us to realise how keen a prophet is the man who wrote, of such "scientific explanations": "It seems to us that science is only then real science when a man . . . weaves in a specialised, scientific jargon an obscure network of conventional phrases — theological, philosophical, historical, juridical, or politico-economic — semi-intelligible to the man himself, and intended to demonstrate that what now is, is what should be" (p. 205).

What is Art? is a work on esthetic philosophy, and is, in the true sense, a great scientific work. But after what has gone before, one is hardly surprised when the *Quarterly Reviewer* asserts that to Tolstoy, "all science and all philosophy are worthless." Instead of substantiating which assertion, he contents himself with repeating it in substance ten times.

The reviewer makes no serious attempt to explain, to confirm, or to refute, Tolstoy's fundamental views, and the space that he saves by neglecting these views he devotes to depreciation of their author.

Tolstoy gives some examples of art, good in subject-matter, and says: "While offering as examples of art those that seem to me the best, I attach no special importance to my selection. . . . My only purpose in mentioning examples of works of this or that class is to make my meaning clearer" (p. 170).

The reviewer treats these examples as though they were a full catalogue, and as if Tolstoy approved of nothing else: "There remain," says he, "besides the Gospels, the more obvious moralising works of Victor Hugo and of Dickens," etc.

The article teems with the usual amenities, to which the old Russian—struggling so hard, amid discouragement, to help his fellow-men to truths which may set us free from the prejudices and fallacies that underlie so much unwise activity—is, by this time, so well accustomed.

"He has become incapable of admitting more than one side to any question," the reviewer informs us. "Destitute of all historic sense." "Unreasonableness like this is contagious" (which is serious news for the readers of the *Quarterly*). "He has lost all sense of cause and effect," etc., etc.

Many causes have conspired to conceal from English readers the fact that Tolstoy is a great thinker as well as a great artist; but is it no time that respectable journals ceased to mi his views? There are many people — m women — who are, to-day, perplexed how in relation to art. For themselves, for th dren, and for the people, they desire g and are ready to welcome an explan broad principles helping them to know seek and what to shun. They would know how to judge for themselves, inde of the infallible critics who contradict e week by week. Most of the specialists fessionals, and the erudite esthetician want Tolstoy's explanations: "They whole have no need of a physician." I then, remain outside the edifice he ha but why will they not suffer "them t entering in to enter"?

HOW TOLSTOY WROTE "RESURRECTION"

TOLSTOY is never satisfied with himself, or with what he has accomplished. He is always striving [illegible]ard and aiming toward perfection. Whether [illegible]eak to him about his life, or your own, his [illegible]or his philosophical works, he will speak [illegible]ual clearness and sincerity of what is [illegible]shed and of what is yet lacking. When [illegible]n years' efforts to elucidate his view of [illegible]ion in which Art stands to Life were [illegible]ng completion, and he was finishing *Art?* he remarked to the present writer [illegible]elt to blame for having spent so much effort on a work which would be read [illegible]ell-to-do and leisured people, on whom attention is already lavished. "It is [illegible]k that can reach the people."

[illegible]d that at least it gave me and others [illegible]the clue to a perplexing question with [illegible]to which we had been much at sea, and was a great service to us, and made it [illegible]o feel and act as we could not have done such assistance.

[illegible]e quite agreed. It was just what he hoped [illegible]mplish; but the fact remained that he had [illegible]d himself to devote much labour to what

was, at best, but a secondary, not a primary, service of those who most lack aid.

Tolstoy does not seem to be depressed by such reflections. He wishes to see and state things as they are. Another in his place might have emphasised the indirect benefit to the labouring classes that may result from an exposure of the worthless and harmful nature of much that is called "art," and on which, at present, an enormous amount of human labour is wasted. But Tolsto always considers the *sequence*. What is th and most direct duty? is an ever-presen tion with him.

With regard to his own life—living as with his own family, who are comparati off—he has, of course, a room, food an etc., provided for him. And he does n himself with the thought that his clot the plainest and cheapest; that he i vegetarian, avoiding butter, milk, and well as all expensive food, all intoxi even such stimulants as tea and coffee room has only the plainest old furniture he uses as little money as possible. No plainly that he cannot justify this wa To allow things to be provided for on use of money is not right. Circumstance ties — have led him into a position whi him leisure to write books, and he hop books do good. But to say, as he does, " not see my way to act otherwise—it came na to me to act so," though it is an explanation,

not pretend to be a justification. When all is said and done, we are "unprofitable servants."

This, indeed, is the frame of mind to which Tolstoy's view of life inevitably tends to bring every sincere man who accepts it. Ways of life, occupations, customs and beliefs generally approved by society are analysed, and shown to be based on selfishness, credulity, or stupidity. Arriving at these conclusions of the intellect, however, though they may modify our feelings and influence our ...oes not abolish those defects or that nature ...hich made the former occupations, customs, ...etc., possible. What we shall do, or even ... *can* do in the future, depends very largely ... we have done in the past. Finite and ... beings cannot act perfectly, and if they ...y would be out of place in a world in ... *perfection* but *progress* is man's normal ...

... follows inevitably from the belief that ...n race has progressed, is progressing, ...ld progress. We must not advance at ...r mechanically, but have first to discern ... ahead of our present practice. Self-...on produces stagnation. The publican ... himself to be a sinner is more capable ...vement than the contented pharisee.

...ve discerned and to compel others to ...e defects in social, political, national and ...s conventions which we are in danger of ...ng as sacrosanct is one of the greatest ...ces Tolstoy has performed for his generation.

And nowhere has he done this more powerfully and effectively than in his last novel, *Resurrection*. It reminds one of Socrates, who told his judges that he was a gadfly stinging that lazy horse, the Athenian people, into action! Humanity must be up and doing — ever approaching a step nearer to the ideal of being "perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."

The story of the production of *Resurrection* is marked all through with traces of the struggle between what could be done and what ideally should be done.

When his legal friend, Kóni, gave Tolstoy an outline of the story as it occurred in real life, Tolstoy at once perceived its value as framework for a novel; but he had much other work on hand that seemed more important. His artistic nature, long deprived of free and full scope, drew him on to write the novel, and he knew how many readers can be reached by a novel who can be touched by no other book-work; but there was the other work to do, and it seemed to him of more serious importance. *What is Art?* was not then written; *The Christian Teaching* was not finished (indeed, it never has been finished, and was eventually printed in England, in English and in Russian, in a somewhat incomplete condition). He has long wished to write on education, a subject on which prevailing opinions and customs seem to him terribly in need of sweeping reform. A clear, short work on philosophy: one which should put the best human thoughts on life,

death, matter, spirit, goodness, destiny, faith and credulity so simply that they might be grasped by any intelligent cabman, was another of the many tasks he had in contemplation. A thousand and one projects teemed in his fertile brain, and the novel had to struggle for existence with many a project that his conscience more fully approved of.

The result was that the novel got itself written with difficulty, again and again being put aside for other work. We may be quite sure that this struggle was not without influence on the writer and on what he wrote. It was this desire to render the utmost service of which he was capable that made even the novel, of which he only partly approved, what it is—a most powerful piece of propaganda. As W. T. Stead says: "It is gravid with all Count Tolstoy's distinctive teaching. It is a kind of shrapnel-shell of a novel. The novel is but the containing case. The genius of the author is the explosive force, which scatters its doctrines like the closely-packed bullets among the enemy." What subjects of vital interest to the forward movement of humanity does it not touch upon? and which of them does it fail to set in a fresh light, almost compelling the reader to share the author's feeling? Non-resistance and the employment of violence among men, government and legality, the sex question, militarism, capital punishment, prisons, luxury, class distinctions, officialism, church superstition, vegetarianism, socialism, the land question, anarchism, nihilism,

and Christianity, real and spurious — all come under survey — and the author's feeling about each is passed on to the reader as only an artist of first-rate power could pass it on.

When the story had been written in the rough, it was laid aside unfinished, and with little apparent chance of ever being finished. Tolstoy had resolved to spend no more time on it, and not to allow it to be published during his lifetime. But "there is a destiny that shapes our ends," and things occurred which altered this resolution.

In the Caucasus the persecution of the Doukhobórs for refusing military service broke out with fury in the year 1895. In one district of 4000 Doukhobórs as many as 1000 perished within three years, owing to want, exposure, anxiety, and unhealthy conditions, caused by their being driven from their homes and placed in localities where it was impossible for them to find sufficient work, or means of livelihood. At last, in 1898, permission was granted them to emigrate. The conditions were, that those who had been called upon to serve in the army must remain, as well as the leaders and others (about one hundred and ten in all) who had been exiled to Siberia. The rest might go, at their own expense (after being in many cases completely ruined), and if any of them ever returned, they were to be exiled to distant parts of the Empire.

The conditions were rigorous enough, but at least they made it possible to save the lives of these people — men, women, and children — who

could not be kept alive in the conditions in which they were then situated.

Once again Tolstoy was drawn by two different tendencies. He had long before considered the economic enigmas of our social system, and had made up his mind definitely that it is a gigantic delusion to suppose that we do good by sucking up money in rent, interest, or profits, and then pouring it out again in charities. We are in such a case only "making pipes of ourselves"; we take the money from people who want it, and who, perhaps, know how to use it better than we do; we hamper ourselves, and consume our own time and energy in first collecting and then disbursing it, and finally we often distribute it unwisely, and the results are never what we expect them to be. So that the wise course is to tread in the footsteps of Buddha, Socrates, or Jesus—be as little absorbed by or encumbered with money as possible. A man's service to his fellows consists in what he himself does, not in what he bribes other people to do. Indeed, he serves others far better by offering them advice and good example, and then leaving them free to act, than he can ever do by seeking to control their activities by the inducement or the constraint of money.

This was no merely abstract theory—it was the line of life which he had definitely adopted. When people demanded money of him, he could usually reply with perfect truth, "I have no money." But now thousands of poor peasants were starving and dying because they were faithful to principles of

non-resistance which he entirely shared. They were almost friendless, or at any rate they had no other friend so well able to help them as he was—and he all the time was eating his regular three meals a day while they were starving. An almost similar problem had faced him at the time of the famine in 1891 and 1892. Europe and America have rung with praises of the work he then did in organising relief in the famine districts. Contributions flowed to him from all sides. He worked indefatigably and admirably. And—it is entirely characteristic of the man—he does not approve of what he did, and is sure that the handling of money in order to make other people work as he wishes them to, is not a worthy activity in which to spend his time. "I cannot get away from the conclusion. If I believed that money does good, I ought to alter my whole way of life and go back to money-making," says Tolstoy.

Now, however, as in 1891, his feelings were too strong for his intellectual conclusions.

He had, from 1895 onward, written in strong condemnation of the persecution, thus giving publicity to facts which the Russian Government was most anxious to conceal, and no reference to which was permitted in the Russian press; and now, not without hesitation, he resolved to allow the publication of *Resurrection*, in order that the profits might be used to assist the Doukhobórs.

The work was sold to Marx, the editor of an illustrated Petersburg weekly paper, for a sum

of money to be paid in advance. But fresh perplexities awaited the author. He had for twenty years past refused to work for pay, and had announced that he wished to retain no copyright in anything he wrote—it was all, when once published, to be free to whoever liked to use it. He had, moreover, always strenuously avoided working against time—that is, being obliged to have a certain quantity of copy ready corrected by a certain date. Now everything that he disliked and wished to avoid befell him. There were many claimants for the privilege of producing the work, and to select between them without giving offence was no easy matter. Even after Marx had secured the prize there were vexatious problems to be faced. The work was not to be copyrighted in Russia, the freedom promised to any one to reproduce the Russian original of Tolstoy's works after they were once published was to be respected; but Marx was paying money, and wanted to know precisely what he was to have for his money. He would give Rs. 30,000 if he might have the sole rights for even a few weeks after serial publication ended, or he would give Rs. 12,000 only, if he was merely to have the opportunity of first publication in serial form. Tolstoy, after hesitating, decided to take the smaller amount. But unforeseen troubles were in store. Other editors began to reprint the weekly instalments directly Marx published them. Marx protested that he had expected to remain in undisturbed possession of the

work at least until it was completed. Tolstoy was persuaded to write an open letter appealing to the good feeling of the other editors to abstain from reprinting the story before its completion. They acceded to his request, but the difficulties and complications were far from ending there. There were, of course, the usual troubles with the press censor in St Petersburg. Whatever was likely to impair the authority of Church or State, and whatever else might seem objectionable to the official whose duty it was to revise the book, had to be omitted. Naturally, Part III., in which the treatment of the prisoners on their way to Siberia and in Siberia is described, suffered most. But all through the book whole chapters, as well as parts of chapters and many stray sentences here and there, fell under the strokes of the executioner with the red pencil.

In Part I., of Chapters XXXIX. and XL., only the words: "The church service began," were left, and the whole of Chapter XIII., describing the effect of army life, disappeared. In Part II., Chapter XXVII., describing the visit to Toporóff, the head of the Holy Synod, had, of course, to be struck out; indeed, had the book been by almost any one but Tolstoy, such a life-like portrait of the arch-persecutor Pobedonóstseff would probably have caused the suppression of the book and the arrest of its author. Among the other chapters that suffered heavily in Part II. were Chapter XIX.: the general in charge of the prison in Petersburg; Chapter XXX.: the classification of

criminals, and Chapter XXXVIII.: the starting of the convict train from Moscow.

On the whole, Russian readers wonder that the book got through the censor's hands as well as it did. It surely deserved the honour of being burned at least as much as those previous works by the same author which received that mark of attention from a paternal Government. But, though nothing better could have been expected, it can never be a pleasure to watch the gradual mutilation of the latest offspring of one's brain, especially when one knows that the same process will be repeated in other countries, not to please an autocratic Government, but simply to suit the taste of a public who want the story the novelist has to tell, but do not want the message the prophet is bent on delivering.

M. Wysewa, for instance, who has an admirable command of the French language, not content with polishing Tolstoy's simple and direct style into exquisitely flowing book-language, omits the description of the church service in order to conciliate the Catholics, and leaves out what Tolstoy says about the army, lest it should alienate the sympathy of the anti-Dreyfusites.

Tolstoy's translators have, indeed, in the past been guilty of many things, both wilfully and involuntarily. As an instance of the latter class of delinquencies one recalls the German translation of *Anna Karénina*, which altered the motto of the book from: "Vengeance is mine—I will repay," into "Revenge is sweet—I play the ace!"

And an American version of one of Tolstoy's philosophical works repeatedly converts the Russian double negative into an English affirmative, thus making Tolstoy affirm precisely what he wished to deny!

But besides the Russian censor and the foreign translators, there are the editors and publishers to be reckoned with before those dangerous explosives—the thoughts of Tolstoy—can reach the public, who might be harmed by them.

As an instance of what publishers can do, take the following case: The *Echo de Paris*, in which *Resurrection* appeared, received letters from some of its readers complaining that Nekhlúdoff did not occupy himself sufficiently with Katúsha. There was, they said, not enough love story in the book. The editor thereupon—knowing that his business was to cater for his public and to supply what they wanted—omitted the next instalment and hurried on to a scene in which Nekhlúdoff again occupied himself with Katúsha, though, it is to be feared, not quite in the manner desired.

What happened in America with the serial publication of the work is too well known to need special mention. Tolstoy's point of view on the sex question, and the opinion which is dominant and blatant in many religious circles of the English-speaking world, are wide as the poles asunder. Both disapprove of and would discourage what is lewd and sensual, but the method too often followed among us is to seek

to inflict penalties on those of whose actions we disapprove, and to fine, punish, or imprison them, while we abandon all consideration and discussion of sex questions to those who approach the subject for pleasure or for gain. Tolstoy would leave penalties to be inflicted by "Him that hath no sin," but would express his opinions and feelings as simply, freely, and fully on this as on any other subject, hoping to convert or to influence those whom he would never consent to coerce.

When the publication of *Resurrection* was once decided on, Tolstoy set eagerly to work revising it. And the revision amounted to completely re-writing the book, and re-writing parts of it several times over. So greatly did he lengthen the work that (in spite of the damage done by the censor) Marx voluntarily added another Rs. 10,000 to the payment of Rs. 12,000 which he had made in advance.

Tolstoy was never satisfied. Whenever proofs reached him, fresh and ever fresh, corrections and alterations had to be made; so that the translators abroad were unable to receive the final version of some chapters till they were already published in Petersburg. This increased the danger of unauthorised versions appearing, which would contribute nothing to the cause which had spurred Tolstoy on to allow the book to be produced.

So exacting was he to his work, and so prolific in corrections, that on several occasions even after the "final" version had come to hand, been trans-

lated, and even set up in type, a fresh and yet more finally final version of the chapter would arrive, and the translator's and type-setter's work had to be done over again.

A couple of years ago, Tolstoy mentioned in a private letter that whereas in earlier life, when he still sold his works in the usual manner, the publication of each new work afforded him pleasure; now, when he wishes to do better and refuses to receive pay for his work, he finds that the publication of each new book involves him in much perplexity and trouble, many people are displeased with him, and instead of being a pleasure publication has become a pain.

His experience with *Resurrection* has been even more painful than usual. Tolstoy's great desire is to live at peace with all men, to do nothing that may create anger and ill-will; but, on the contrary, to serve others, and to bring them into harmony with himself, and with one another. But if merely abjuring the beaten track, and preferring to give rather than to sell his works involved him in trouble, the case has been far worse now that he has allowed his sympathy for the persecuted Doukhobórs to cause him to swerve from the direction he had taken—a direction to which those about him had begun to adapt themselves.

Busy with his work, and quite out of touch with commercial ways of thought and action, Tolstoy had to intrust the foreign (non-Russian) editions of his work to others, and if the difficulties in

Russia were great, abroad they were greater. In Germany a quarrel broke out owing to the fact that Marx was supplying some newspapers, while others were receiving copy from Tolstoy's representative in England. And each side urgently demanded that Tolstoy should support them and repudiate the other. In America the serial publication in the *Cosmopolitan* broke down, and at one time there was danger of legal proceedings between the editor of that magazine and the agent employed by Tolstoy's English representative.

However, at last the work was published, and published in an unmutilated form. Nothing was omitted in the English translation. In Germany the work had a great success, and quickly ran through a dozen editions. A second (and this time a complete) French translation, by Halperine Kaminsky, was prepared. And the complete Russian text was published both in England and in Germany.

The book has appeared even in the Swedish and Slovak languages, and whatever difficulties arose anywhere were smoothed over by the feeling that it would not do to go to law over a book of Tolstoy's. Everybody knew that Tolstoy was doing his best, and was acting unselfishly, and whether they agreed as to the expediency of his course or not, they put up with it.

As showing Tolstoy's own state of mind at different times, the following extracts from his letters may be of interest.

On the 24th of January 1899, when the work had been sold to Marx, and the question of allowing or not allowing any copyright in Russia or elsewhere was being discussed, he said in a letter to the present writer: "In this whole business there is something indefinite, confused, and *seemingly* discordant with the principles we profess. Sometimes — in bad moments — this acts on me, too, and I wish to get rid of the affair as quickly as I can, but when I am in a good, serious frame of mind I am even glad of the unpleasantness bound up with it. I know that my motives were, if not good, at least quite innocent; and therefore if in men's eyes it makes me appear inconsistent, or even something still worse, it is all good for me, teaching me to act quite independently of men's judgment, and in accord only with conscience. One should prize such experiences. They are rare, and very useful."

When the work was drawing toward its close, and he was fagged out with the distasteful task of having to correct the weekly instalment by a fixed date, and he was approaching the very severe illness that showed itself in an acute attack on the 24th of December 1900, he wrote to another friend: "I am much absorbed in my work. And, regularly, as soon as I see the proof-sheets from Marx I feel sick and have pain. . . . I am so occupied with writing the book that I spend my whole strength on it. Other movements of the soul go on within me; and, thank God, I see the light, and see it more and more. More and more

often I feel myself not the master of my life, but a labourer. . . ."

When the work was at last finished, he wrote on the 27th December 1899: "All that money business that I undertook, and of which I now repent, has been so tormentingly painful that now when it is over I have decided to have nothing more to do with the matter, but to return to my former attitude toward the publication of my writings — that is, while letting others do as they please with them, to stand quite aside from the business myself."

While quoting from Tolstoy's recent letters, I should like to mention the frequent and reckless mis-statements that have appeared about him of late in the press. Tolstoy was very ill—at death's door, in fact—in December 1900, and this was correctly reported in the papers; but they have frequently credited him with serious illnesses from which he never suffered; and have made the Emperor consult him about his peace proposals and pay him a friendly visit which never took place. Then, after passing an imaginary sentence of banishment upon him, they proceeded to make him a pro-Boer, eager for Boer victories. When this was pointed out to Tolstoy, he replied, on the 8th February 1900:

"Of course I could not have said, and did not say, what is attributed to me. What really took place was this: A newspaper correspondent came to me as an author wishing to present me with

a copy of his book. In answering a question of his as to my attitude toward the war, I mentioned that I had been shocked during my illness to catch myself wishing to find news of Boer successes, and that I was therefore glad to have an opportunity, in a letter to V., to express my real relation to the matter, which is that I cannot sympathise with any military achievements, not even with a David opposed to ten Goliaths; but that I sympathise only with those who destroy the cause of war: the prestige of gold, of wealth, of military glory, and, above all (the cause of all the evil), the prestige of patriotism, with its pseudo-justification of the murder of our brother men,"

and added: "I do not think it is worth while replying to opinions falsely attributed to me in the papers. 'You can't salute everyone that sneezes'" (a Russian proverb). "For instance, I have lately received letters from America, in some of which I am reproached and in others praised for having repudiated all my convictions. Is it worth replying when to-morrow twenty more such items may be produced to fill up the columns of the newspapers and the pockets of the editors? However, do as you like about it."

But is Tolstoy satisfied with *Resurrection* now that it is completed?

Not altogether. In *What is Art?* he has shown us how necessary it is to view every work of art in two aspects: considering it in relation to (1) Form, and to (2) Subject-matter.

Resurrection deals undoubtedly with feelings deeply experienced by the author, and re-evoked by him in order to infect others and cause them to share these feelings with him and with each other. In reply to the question, Does it infect us?—is the form such as to produce the intended effect?—I feel no hesitation in replying for myself that it does. But its intention is to influence as many people as possible, and to influence them as much as possible; to what *extent* does it succeed in this attempt?

Granting that it has all the signs of genuine art —that it is sincere, and possesses both individuality and clearness—how far does it reach? A dozen versions have appeared already, and more are coming; tens of thousands of copies have been sold already, but will it reach the *people*? Will it, like that ancient Egyptian novel, the story of Joseph, pass from age to age, reaching rich and poor, young and old, learned and simple? No; we must admit that, to a certain extent, it is "exclusive" art: art not confined to, but chiefly suited to, leisured and cultured people, to whom a novel of over five hundred pages is not a heavy burden. Compared with other novels, especially compared to Tolstoy's former novels, and allowing for the tremendous amount of matter in it, it is not lacking in compression. The indictment against it is one which well-nigh all novels must share, but no doubt it is to some extent weighted with superfluous details, and lacking in that simplicity, brevity, and compression essential

to the form of any story that aims at becoming "universal art."

On the 29th of December 1899, Tolstoy wrote: " . . . the day before yesterday I sent off the last chapters of *Resurrection*; I am dissatisfied with them, but feel that that task is ended, and with joy and hope I waver in the choice of my next work."

Some readers complain that the hero, Nekhlûdoff, did not achieve tangible results—did not reform society, found a colony, influence the Tsar, or do something that the newspapers would take notice of. But Tolstoy is describing life as he has seen and known it. He perceives that the principles of Jesus condemn the Prince of this World, and that society, as we know it, is as certainly doomed to pass away as was imperial Rome and the slave-world of two thousand years ago. But he knows, too, by experience, that for men to be willing co-workers with Jesus in establishing a better order of society, the first condition must be a re-birth, a change of the inner man. We must learn to see things as they are; to discern good from evil; to distinguish the real from the apparent, and to know the true purpose of human life. External changes in the form and structure of society will (as they always have done) follow and depend upon the *character* of the men who form the society.

We live in a time of transition, when men hardly know in which direction they wish to advance. Some believe in imperialism and the reign of force, a few believe in non-resistance and the

brotherhood of man. Some in the divine right of kings, others in the divine right of majorities and the infallibility of the odd voter; a few believe in the "inward voice" of reason and conscience.

It would be untrue to life—untrue to the experience of such a man even as Tolstoy himself—to represent the resurrection to a new purpose and meaning in life, as producing large and immediate external results other than that the individual when re-born seeks to leave the path of evil and choose the good. Those who want quick returns and visible advantages must deal with the surface of events and shun fundamental problems. The mills of God grind slowly. As well demand of a shoot that has felt the approach of Spring and begun to bud, that it should plant a garden, as demand of a man who, touched by the spirit of truth and love, is turning his back upon an evil past, that he should re-organise society.

As to subject-matter, the book will stand any test that can be applied. It belongs both to "universal" and to "religious" art, especially to the latter and higher branch of art. That is to say, again and again Tolstoy evokes feelings in us which remind us that we are all of one spirit, sons of one Father, and again, even more frequently, he awakens sentiments which have slumbered in the depths of our nature, so that we hardly knew we possessed them, and impels us to take purer and less selfish views of our relation, one to another, and of the purpose of our life.

INTRODUCTION TO "THE SLAVERY OF OUR TIMES"

THIS little book shows, in a short, clear, and systematic manner, how the principle of Non-Resistance, about which Tolstoy has written so much, is related to economic and political life.

The great majority of men, without knowing why, are constrained to labour long hours at tasks they dislike, and often to live in unhealthy conditions. It is not because man has so little control over nature, that to obtain a subsistence it is necessary to work in this way, but because men have made laws about land, taxes, and property, which result in placing the great bulk of the people in conditions which compel them to labour thus, or go to the workhouse, or starve.

It may be said that man's nature is so bad, that were it not for these laws an even worse state of things would exist; that the laws we make and tolerate are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual disgrace—the selfishness of man—which is the real root of the evil. But granting that, in a sense, this is true, we need not suppose man's nature to be immutable, and all progress for ever impossible. Nor need we suppose it our duty to leave progress in the hands of some kind of a self-acting evolution, whose operations we can only watch as a passenger watches the working of a ship's engines. We may

consider the effect of the laws we have made, approve or disapprove of them, discern the direction in which it is possible to advance, and take our part in furthering or hampering that advance.

Laws are made by Governments, and are enforced by physical violence. We have been so long taught that it is good for some people to make laws for others, that most men approve of this. Just as "genteel" people have been known to approve of wholesale while they turned up their noses at retail business, so people in general, while disapproving of robbery and murder when done on a small scale, admire them when they are organised, and when they result in allotting most of the land on which forty millions have to live to a few thousands, and in periodically sending out thousands of men to kill and to be killed. Nor are people much shocked at isolated murders, the responsibility for which is subdivided between the King, the hangman, the judge, jury, and officials.

To Tolstoy's mind, violence done by man to man is wrong. We cannot escape the wrongness by doing it wholesale, or by subdividing the responsibility.

But what would happen if we ceased to abet it?

If it were possible forcibly to oblige men to cease from using force, the selfishness which is at the root of the matter would, no doubt, burst out in some fresh form. That is, in fact, pretty much what has happened: weary of strife and private feuds, people consented to leave to Governments the use of force. External peace among individuals has ensued, but in place of strife with club or sword, a new struggle almost

as fierce is carried on under legal and commercial forms. Tolstoy's desire is not that people should be compelled to cease from violence, but that violence should become to them abhorrent, and that they should not wish to sway others more than they can be swayed by reason and by sympathy. Were that accomplished, surely we may trust that good would come of good, as now ill comes of ill. At anyrate, as Tolstoy shows, there is no other path of advance. We can neither revert to the belief that to use violence is a divine right of kings, nor can we maintain the current belief that to do so is a divine right of majorities. To be subjected by force to a rule we disapprove of is slavery, and we are all slaves or slave-owners (sometimes both together) as long as our society bases itself on violence.

But can we abolish the use of violence, and cease to imprison and kill our fellow-men?

We can at least consider what Tolstoy says on the matter, and realise that organised violence exists, claiming our approval, and that it is possible to withhold that approval. As for abolishing violence—it is for us not a question of Yes or No, but it is a question of more or less. The amount of violence committed depends on the amount of support the violators receive. There are places where it is now impossible to get anyone to become a hangman, and even in England, comparatively brutal as we are, it would be impossible to re-enact the penal code of George III., under which 160 different crimes were punishable with death. To shake ourselves completely free

from all share in violence, if we are not quite ready to become martyrs, may seem and does seem impossible. Tolstoy himself does not profess to have ceased to use postage-stamps which are issued, or the highway that is maintained, by a Government which collects taxes by force; but reforms come by men doing what they can, not what they can't. It would be a very easy, and a very silly, reply to the teaching of Jesus, to say that as he tells us to be perfect, and we can't be perfect, we can get no guidance from his teaching. In the same way, anyone who wishes to be logical but not reasonable, may say that as Tolstoy tells us to stand aside from all violence, and as we cannot do so, his guidance is useless. Tolstoy relies on his readers to use common-sense, and the common-sense of the matter is, that if we are so enmeshed in a system based on violence, and if we ourselves are so weak and faulty, that we cannot avoid being parties to acts of violence, we should avoid this as much as we can.

The mind is more free than the body,—let us, at least, try to understand the truth of the matter, and not excuse a vicious system in order to shelter ourselves. When we have understood the matter, let us not fear to speak out; and when we have confessed our views, let us try to bring our lives more and more in harmony with them.

To free ourselves from the perplexity produced by the dual standard of *legality* and of *right*, would alone be an enormous gain. Take, for instance, the drink traffic in England; — what friction and waste of power has resulted from

the attempts to legislate on the matter. How greatly brewers, distillers, and dealers have gained in respectability by the fact that their occupations were *legal*, if not *right*. And is it not becoming evident that it is not by laws that such evils as the drink trade can be met?

But, we are told, people are so inconsiderate and so wrong-headed that nothing but the strong arm of the law will restrain them. To disturb their respect for the law is dangerous.

Of course it is dangerous! Every great moral movement, and every strong reform movement has its very real dangers. A century and a half after St Francis of Assisi had stirred Europe by his example of self-renunciation and devotion to the service of others, such a crowd of impudent mendicants shirking the drudgery of a workaday world were preying on society in his name, that Wycliff denounced them as sturdy beggars, and strongly censured any "man who gives alms to a begging friar."

History is apt to repeat itself in such matters, and, no doubt, Tolstoy's views will be again and again exploited by unworthy disciples. But is humanity to stagnate because what is evil is so easily grafted on what is good? To think and to move may be dangerous, but to stagnate is to die; and progress along the path of violence—as Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Rome, Spain, and many other nations have shown—is progress to destruction.

No doubt, too, many good people will be shocked at Tolstoy's statement that "Laws are rules made by people who govern by means of organised

violence." They will plead that, in modern Governments, the administrative functions are becoming more and more predominant, and the coercive ones are falling more and more into abeyance. But the reply is, that Governments need only drop these dwindling and secondary functions in order to escape the criticism here levelled at them. Governments which, without insisting on having their services accepted, are content to offer to organise society on a voluntary basis — killing no one, imprisoning no one, and relying on reason and persuasion to make their decrees prevail—are not here attacked.

And whatever good-natured people may wish to believe about Governments, the fact is that existing Governments rely on force, and that when they do not rely on force we do not call them Governments, but voluntary associations.

That men concerned in governing others know this, is shown all through history, and has been again shown recently in South Africa. As long as Kruger and his party had the armed force, the Boer reform party, the miners, and even Messrs Beit, Rhodes & Co., had to submit. In the time of the Raid the question who, in future, should make the laws, hung in the balance — it might be Kruger, or Rhodes, or somebody else; but it was sure to be the man, or men, who could obtain the advantage of being allowed openly, systematically, and unblushingly, to do violence to those who disobeyed them. Men who were organising the buccaneers one day, might become (and may yet become) a "Government" another

day. In fact, just as in Sparta it was considered immoral, not to thieve, but to be caught thieving, so among modern moralists (such as Paley) it has been gravely argued that the morality of using violence against the men in power depends on the chance of being successful.

Tolstoy says that the systematic use of organised violence lies at the root of the ills from which our society suffers; and while agreeing with the indictment Socialism brings against the present system, he points out that the establishment of a Socialist State would involve the enforcement of a fresh form of slavery—direct compulsion to labour. And if he is not at one with the Socialists, neither is he at one with the Revolutionary party of Russian Anarchists, usually spoken of in England as "Nihilists." They, indeed, are often very bitter in their denunciations of Tolstoy, whose influence has increased the moral repugnance felt for their policy of assassination. Their accusation that Tolstoy wishes to oppose despotism by mere metaphysics is, however, met in the present work by a direct and explicit appeal to conscientious people not voluntarily to pay taxes to Governments which spend the money on organising violence and murder.

This view of the duty of individuals towards Governments has had exponents in our own language. The saintly Quaker, John Woolman, wrote in his journal in 1757—

"A few years past, money being made current in our province for carrying on wars, and to be called in again by taxes laid on the inhabitants,

my mind was often affected with the thoughts of paying such taxes . . . there was in the depth of my mind a scruple which I never could get over; and at certain times I was greatly distressed on that account. I believed that there were some upright-hearted men who paid such taxes, yet could not see that their example was a sufficient reason for me to do so, while I believe that the spirit of truth required of me, as an individual, to suffer patiently the distress of goods, rather than pay actively." He found he was not alone among the Friends of Philadelphia in this matter.

Nearly a century later Henry Thoreau wrote in his admirable essay on "Civil Disobedience"—

"I heartily accept the motto — 'That Government is best which governs least'; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—'That Government is best which governs not at all'; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of Government which they will have. . . .

"It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong; he may properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support.

"I do not hesitate to say that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the Government of Massachusetts, and not wait till they constitute a majority of

one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbours constitutes a majority of one already."

Holding these views, he refused to pay the poll-tax, and was put in prison for one night, till someone paid the tax for him—much to his disgust.

Tolstoy, therefore, is in good company in holding the view that it were better to offer a passive resistance to Governments than voluntarily to pay what they demand and misapply. Such refusals might bring about the bloodless revolution of which Thoreau spoke—

"If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceful revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer or any other public officer asks me, as one has done, 'But what shall I do?' my answer is, 'If you really wish to do anything, resign your office.' When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished."

But while we remember that Tolstoy is in good company in this matter, and that he here offers just what some people pine for—something definite and decided to do or to refuse to do—we shall, I think, make a sad mistake if we fail to differentiate between the main intention and drift of his work and such a piece of practical advice as this.

The main intention and drift of the work is to show that progress in human well-being can only be achieved by relying more and more on reason and conscience, and less and less on man-made laws; that we must be ready to sacrifice the material progress we have been taught to esteem so highly, rather than acquiesce in such injustice and inequality as is flagrant among us to-day; that what we desire is the supremacy of truth and goodness, and that consequently violence from man to man must more and more be recognised as evil, whether it boasts itself in high places or lurks in slums—and that we must more and more free ourselves from the taint of murder that clings to all robes of state.

These things, to my mind, seem certainly true; we must turn our back on the religion of Jesus if we would rebut them.

But as soon as it comes to any definite precept and external rule to do this, or not to do that—we must remember that what is really needed, and what Tolstoy is aiming at, is that mankind should steadily advance towards perfection, and no one action can be the *next step* for all men in all places.

Of the three things Tolstoy here definitely advises,—viz.: (1) not to take part in Governmental activity; (2) not to pay taxes, but to submit rather to imprisonment or seizure of goods; (3) to possess only what others do not claim from us;—it is the third that is the most difficult and the most important. Without it the others would have no great value; and our own falling short in it is a reminder of what is so

important—viz. that *we* form parts of the obstacle hindering the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Nor would external obedience avail: "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing." I knew a man who performed an act of heroic generosity, but was so self-willed and wrong-headed that he set others at discord; and I knew a woman whose advance along the path of unselfishness was almost free from friction, yet who helped an ever-increasing circle of men and women to shape their lives better than they would have done without her aid and encouragement.

I will not stop to discuss the tempting subject (more than once treated of by Tolstoy in other books) of Christ's relation to Cæsar and to taxes. A very fair case may be made out for the view that the hardest blow ever dealt at the power of the prince of this world, was dealt by carrying the doctrine of non-resistance one step further than Tolstoy takes it in this book. Why not, it may be asked, hand over the tribute-money to Cæsar as one might yield one's purse to a highway robber without waiting for him to put his hand in one's pocket.

But whatever may be the best method of undermining the authority of the prince of this world, the condemnation pronounced by Jesus makes in the same direction as Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience," and Tolstoy's theory of "Non-Resistance." Each in his own way says, "The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are

called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Luke xxii. 25, 26).

The prince of this world is judged,—the change foreshadowed is a vast one, and must commence with a change of each man's inner self. But its outward manifestations may be as various as the flowers of the field which are all fed by the same rain and sunshine from above.

The direction of the change is shown in this book on Slavery, and the heart of the matter is reached in the truth that he who would reform society must first reform himself. It is not by "retaining India," by being "paramount" in Africa, or by insisting on "our rights" as individuals or as nations, that we shall establish the Kingdom of God. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life—shall find it." When men have learnt not to desire to retain what others claim, the Kingdom of God within them will make itself outwardly manifest. Nor will this change be a sudden one; age after age it is going on, step by step, inch by inch, in men's hearts and consciences, and even in their manners and customs. And it is because we dimly perceive and desire, that the poor shall be blessed, and "the meek shall inherit the earth," that we sympathise with those who strive to hasten the process, whether by the tender persuasion of a Woolman or the vehement logic of a Tolstoy.

October 1900.

OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

AFTER THE TSAR'S CORONATION

THIS coronation, more destructive of wealth and more fatal to life than many a pitched battle, I witnessed, not as a special correspondent bound to telegraph columns of descriptive copy day by day, but as a resident; and having time to chew the cud of reflection, I ask myself in how far does a similar demoniac possession by the passions of patriotism and loyalty afflict the inhabitants of the British Empire? I fear that the worship of rank, wealth, and especially of royalty, in many English people amounts to an hypnotic influence, depriving them of reasoning power and of all sense of proportion. A curious instance of this was contained in a letter I received lately from a near relation of my own, who, *à propos* of this very coronation calamity, wrote: "The Moscow disaster has been very terrible to read about, and I feel so sorry for the Emperor and Empress." That is as though when a house falls in, killing and maiming the members of several families, one's first thought were to feel pity for the ground landlord! Yet it is a fair sample of the feeling expressed by many people.

A still more striking example of the same sentiment came under my notice some years ago. Another near relative of mine had an acquaint-

ance, a Miss Wells. A Russian lady, who pronounces English rather badly, came into her room one day with the announcement, "Wales is dead!" "What?" cried my relation; "the Prince of Wales is dead?" and she burst into a flood of genuine tears for a man she had never spoken to. But she cheered up promptly on discovering that it was only her friend Miss Wells who had departed this life. Such "loyalty" may have seemed suitable in the time of Edward the Black Prince (whose courage in the eyes of his contemporaries outweighed his cruelty), but it seems somewhat out of place when applied to Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

I recollect also, as a boy of nine, a couple of years after the close of the Civil War in the United States of America, that my father's duty was taken for some months by a Canadian clergyman, who came to live at the parsonage. He was very friendly to me, and under his guidance my mind expanded; on politics, however (a subject to which he introduced me), the main point he made clear to my boyish perceptions was the terrible blunder committed by the English Government in not seizing the opportunity afforded by the American War. He pointed out that by joining the Confederate States—a policy in which we should have been enthusiastically supported by both Canada and France—we could have broken the United States in two, and the hegemony of the English-speaking nations would have remained with England. I accepted this

teaching with faith and enthusiasm, never asking what would have been the fate of the slaves, or what I should have gained personally by an arrangement which might have condemned North America to that militarism which has since then grown like a cancer on Europe. Nor did either he or I consider how the transaction would look from the standpoint of an Eternal that loveth righteousness.

I now—thanks to the teaching of Tolstoy—see the insanity of attempting to guide the destinies of mankind on motives of expediency which run counter to the plainest laws of morality. We have not seen the ultimate results of England's non-intervention in that war, still less can we tell what would have resulted had she fought; but we may know that no aim can justify the use of evil means, and that hatred and bloodshed are evil, whether we think they tend to "establish *the* empire" (which is not the kingdom of God) or not.

Yet what but my Canadian friend's conception of right and wrong can justify Palmerston's or Disraeli's policy of defending the integrity of the Ottoman Empire by force or by threats? and what will be the end of these things? Will not "the Eternal have them in derision"? Or what shall be said for the "Christian" journalists who defend Cecil Rhodes and Dr Jameson by quoting the example of Clive and of Warren Hastings,—as men once defended the slave-trade by quoting the example of John Hawkins? Is the growth of our

moral perceptions to be stopped until the British Empire has been sufficiently expanded to satisfy the ambition of the most inflated Englander? Who, after all, can yet tell what the final outcome of the conquest of India, of the greed that caused it, and of the violence that characterised it, will be? Does a nation's life consist in the abundance of the things that it possesses? And does an empire gain in well-being when a small minority "make fortunes" in a distant land, and return to establish families which henceforth live, generation after generation, on the labour of their fellow-men, for whom they in exchange, perchance, make laws which contravene, but do not surpass, the two great commandments approved of by Christ?

We grasp at what we fancy is desirable, as a baby reaches out for a knife that would cut it, or a bottle that holds poison. Our pretence that we murder and steal in order "to do good to less civilised nations," amounts to a declaration that the best results are obtainable, not by doing right, but by doing wrong, and that as a nation we have reached a state of civilisation which we are prepared to force upon others.

And what is this civilisation which, since it does not attract the savages, is to be thrust upon them with rifles and maxim-guns?

Is not the scramble and massacre on the Hodínskoe Field* the very type of what our

* Fields near Moscow, where, on 18th May 1896 (o.s.) the people's *fête* was held, at which some 3000 people perished.

boasted civilisation has brought us to? Only, the grab for tin mugs and bad sausages at the people's *fête* was mere child's play (even with all its bloodshed) to the grab for money which, year after year, crushes thousands into the workhouses and prisons, and into that worst of deaths —prostitution. Some unwholesome food or petty rewards are offered by men who never made or earned them, to those who can push hard enough to get them. A struggle ensues; each strives to be first served; some seize several times their share, but many have to go hungry; lives are lost, property destroyed, and a festival is turned into a house of mourning—

". . . where men sit and hear each other groan;
. . . . . .
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow."

And the rich and great, whose example and guidance have led to such a result, harden their hearts, like Pharoah of old, and hasten to find occupations or amusements, to prepare which the labour and lives of the common people are again demanded.

Of the eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, Jesus said: "Think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." May we not say the same with reference to the three thousand who were massacred on the Hodínka? Is not our society actuated by the same motives

of greed (selfish for ourselves, selfish for our families, selfish for our nation) which led those poor peasants to their doom? and do we not see around us the misery and death caused by the industrial competition in which we share? Within the last one hundred and fifty years the productive power of man's labour has increased manifold. Men were fed, clothed, and lodged before the steam-engine was used, the spinning-jenny, the mule, or the power-loom invented—before the ocean was crossed by a steamer, a locomotive had been designed, or the triumphs of applied science (that we hear so much of) had been achieved. Surely all might now be well provided for, were it not for the waste and loss in the scramble, and for the misdirection and ill example of those who profess to lead us!

Think of what a Queen's Drawing-Room means. Women not only dress themselves in extravagant clothes, which many people have laboured many days in want and poverty to produce, but by high wages they tempt their coachmen and footmen from useful work, and use their labour, as well as that of strong, well-fed horses, to take them, shut up in expensive boxes, to the drawing-room, where they will not do anything more useful than courtesy and kiss Her Most Gracious Majesty's hand. This performance is carried on repeatedly and openly, in a city where hungry people lack food, clothing, and lodging to enable them to live and work; and neither the Queen nor the newspapers, nor

the people who waste their time and money at the court, seem even to suspect that there is aught to be ashamed of in the matter.

How can want and poverty be avoided in a society where there are people who think it right and reasonable that the labour of skilled workmen should be devoted to such vanity.

And what wonder if the rest of society, from the burglar to the financier, aim also at enjoying the fruits of other men's labour, and are not particular by what means they gratify their wish! It is, as Isaiah said: "They fight everyone against his brother, and everyone against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom." Mother earth would yield enough for all, without excessive toil or need for any to scramble, to envy, or to hate; but the aim our competitive system sets before men—namely, the outstripping of their fellows in the race for wealth, the grasping and retaining of "property rights" to make ten or one hundred of our fellow-men obey our orders—can only be reached by a few; can only be held precariously and by the use of violence; and can never be approved by anyone to whom Christ's example seems admirable.

Once upon a time five thousand people went out into a wilderness to hear a favourite Preacher. The day was far spent, and no regular provision had been made for their supper; baskets were to be seen here and there, but what they contained had not been reckoned up. The Preacher's own immediate followers had only five barley

loaves and two fishes at hand, but with these he gave a practical lesson in economics. Letting the people sit down in companies of about fifty each, he took the five loaves and two fishes, and having blessed them, he brake them and gave to the disciples, not to eat themselves, but to offer to the people. The example, following on his teaching, and coinciding with his known manner of life, was readily imitated; all shared what they had, like members of one family; and the food produced not only sufficed, but, each being careful for the sake of his fellows to waste nothing, and to take no more than he needed, there turned out to be a superabundance; and when they gathered up the fragments, there remained twelve baskets full of provisions.

That lesson, alas! has been forgotten or lost, owing, perchance, to slowness of understanding in evil and adulterous generations seeking after a sign.

The virtue of selfishly "getting on"; the thrift which means hoarding up to-day what our brother man requires, in order to be able to compel his labour to-morrow,—these things have been so diligently instilled into our minds that it needs an intellectual effort for us even to understand that if men sought first the righteousness of God's kingdom, all these things (necessaries, comforts, arts, and sciences) would be added unto us in good measure, perhaps even pressed down and running over.

Yet how evident the waste and loss of our un-

Christian individualistic system is. Consider, for instance, an Insurance Company. It occupies fine premises; has in its employ agents, correspondents, bookkeepers; it advertises much, calculates much, does much banking, and uses up many books. The whole machine is brought to great perfection—and what does it produce? How much does it add to the wealth of the community? Nothing at all! It is merely one of our many elaborate and expensive contrivances for maintaining a selfish system of society. It safeguards the wealth of individuals, but it leaves the community poorer; for all the men who are unproductively engaged in it have to be fed, clothed, and lodged by the labour of workers. Think of trade secrets—manufacturers carefully hiding their processes one from another, and making goods less durable in order that they may be more saleable. Or, to take another instance: a merchant, trading in Eastern Siberia, finds a cheaper way of getting his goods shipped thither, but the knowledge is only profitable to him so long as he can conceal it from his competitors. And so on through all the processes of trade: it would be easy to multiply examples to any extent. We are so sunk in the bog, that hardly with our utmost effort can we get out of it. But why pretend the thing is good? Why say it is better to live in a bog than on dry ground? Why boast so glibly of our progress and our civilisation, when we have well-nigh lost sight of the ideals which were plainly set up before men thousands of years ago? With an

art that, in its efforts to satisfy the rich, demands labour from the poor to build its studios and exhibitions, and to provide its materials—with a science that is as ready to perfect instruments for human slaughter as it is to write learnedly upon the data of ethics—we pride ourselves, forsooth, on our "advance" beyond the man who said, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

And who really profits by the present system?

Measured in money, and considering the tremendous waste, how few gain and how many lose! Measured by any other standard than filthy lucre, among the people I know there are none who profit: all are losers. The city man has his nervous and digestive troubles, his irritability and anxiety, and he has lost the capacity to tell good from evil, or to be healthily interested even in his own children. His son is cut off from the natural and healthy activity—helpful to others—for which nature has fitted him, and is constrained by his surroundings to find an outlet for his physical energy in rushing like a lunatic after a tennis or a cricket ball, over ground carefully prepared and kept in order by the labour of working-men. The satisfaction and the moral growth which attend on service well rendered to one's fellows (which, rationally organised, in good company, might be so pleasant) is denied him: and who can say how great in its ultimate effect on mind and character that deprivation is?

The daughter may not share the work her father and brother are to devote their lives to, nor is that work such as would be likely to attract her or any rational being; but she is well fed, and requires an outlet for her energies till she gets married and has children,—and she finds it often in family quarrels, or in balls, visiting and theatre-going, or in slave-driving—which is called housekeeping. In either case, instead of using her health and ability to lighten the toil of humanity, she is a dead-weight, making the world poorer by her presence and failing to reap satisfaction for herself. This indeed is the problem which faces Dives to-day. What will you do with your sons and daughters? Which will you stunt: their minds? or their consciences? For if both are allowed to develop, the day is not far off when they will feel a moral revulsion against the system you represent; and the activity you force on the one, and the inactivity you inflict on the other, will alike be moral torture to them.

The injustice of our present system to the great bulk of humanity, who have to labour excessively, who are ill-trained, ill-taught, and ill-cared for, and for whom art and science hardly exist, is painfully obvious. If you search the registers of London churches, I am told, you will find the same family names cropping up for two or three generations, and then dying off. Among the classes who do not get away to the seaside, or go for long holidays in the country, three, or at most

four, generations of city life destroy the family. I do not wish to underrate the importance of free picture-galleries, museums, and libraries open to "the people," but, in so far as they have any effect, they tend to draw more and more of the lower classes into the cities, there, as a rule, to die out. This is a very serious set-off against the good such institutions do to those who have already been engulfed by the city.

Worst of all in the indictment against our civilisation is this, that the ideal held up for men's admiration—that of freedom from the obligation to toil, and the having a legal "right" to consume extravagantly the fruits of other men's labour—is a false light, luring their ships to the quicksand. The difference which divides the economic teaching and example of respectable society from those of Jesus is not a difference of degree only, but of direction; and before we can know whether to steer north or south in this matter, we have to make up our minds whether (1) Jesus meant what he taught, or whether his statements on economic matters were mere windy verbosity — "divine paradoxes," as Dean Farrar calls them; and (2) supposing that he meant what he said, whether he was talking sense.

Christ did not denounce slavery, polygamy, patriotism, or pride of race or of family, because the forms under which man exploits his brother man, and the excuses whereby he justifies his conduct to himself and to others, can be endlessly varied; but he struck at the root of the whole

matter by appealing to the heart of man. He proclaimed the brotherhood of man, and said that to whom much (whether in capacity, in strength, or in means) has been given, from him much shall be required.

The world, age after age, tries other lines — claims "rights" for the skilful, clever, strong, or lucky, and for their descendants after them. But these experiments, such as slavery or feudalism, have broken down in the past, and to-day individualism and the competitive system of production are on their trial, and they too seem to be breaking down. Some faith in them still exists, and holds the system together. You may still meet people who talk about wealth being the reward of industry, and poverty being the merited reward of idleness; but year by year it requires an increasing degree of obtuseness to enable a man to talk in that way without conscious hypocrisy. Mill's indictment of society remains unanswered and unanswerable: it is evidently wrong that "the produce of labour should be apportioned as we now see it, almost in an inverse ratio to the labour — the largest portions to those who have never worked at all, the next largest to those whose work is almost nominal, and so on in a descending scale, the remuneration dwindling as the work grows harder and more disagreeable, until the most fatiguing and exhausting bodily labour cannot count with certainty on being able to earn even the necessaries of life." And, as he rightly says: "If this or communism were the

alternative, all the difficulties, great or small, of communism would be but as dust in the balance."*

"Well, but," says a friend, "granting that things are not as they should be, we are at any rate progressing. This very coronation shows how much worse the Government of Russia is than that of England, and progress in the future must go along the same lines as in the past."

The case seems to be this. The English Government is in closer touch with the people than the Russian Government is. No doubt, in England as in Russia, the rich and educated make the laws, chiefly for their own advantage; but in England they have to reckon with the whims, the passions, and the opinions of the active and audible section of the people who occupy themselves with politics. The sins of the English Government are therefore, in a sense, the sins of the people. In Russia the case is different. An autocratic Government blunders along, not asking advice, resenting criticism, pretending to infallibility, and even trying to dictate to its subjects what they may read and what they must believe. The failure of representative Governments — in England, France, and America—to free men from the yoke that greed and selfishness have put upon them, to divide the fruits of labour more equally, or to make men happier, prevents such faith from growing up in Russia as gave the revolutionary movements of a century or two ago their force in those other countries.

* J. S. Mill, *Political Economy*, People's edition, p. 128.

Far be it from me to underrate the service to humanity of those true men who strove for political emancipation, and kept alive in the hearts of men the sacred hope of a coming time when truth and justice should reign on earth; but is it not obvious that the great Reform Bill of 1832, for instance, has not done what Macaulay and his contemporaries hoped from it? The agitation led by Christ did not aim at any one special practical political change, and yet the echoes of it, lasting through the ages, have inspired, and will yet inspire, reformers in all lands. The agitation for a Reform or a Home Rule Bill concentrates and buries itself in one object, which is accomplished to our disappointment, or perhaps never is accomplished at all.

The line of advance in Russia seems likely to lie, not in upsetting the Government, but in ignoring it. What is desirable is, not that another and a better Pougatchéff should dethrone the Emperor and declare a Constitution, but that men should open their minds to what is true, and, seeing the right, should "obey God rather than men."

Take the example of Prince Hilkóff. Finding by actual experience how impossible it was for him, living as a rich man, to "do good" to the labourers on his estate in the Khárkoff government, to gain their confidence, or to set them any useful example; and seeing that this was necessarily so as long as he demanded from them labour in order that he might live sumptuously, he gave up

his land to the peasant commune, and began to live as nearly as possible like one of them. His influence for good then became great. Seeing that in plain practical matters they were the better and not the worse off for his life, the people came to him for religious guidance also, which he and they found in the Gospels, reading simply "like little children"—looking for what was plain and clear, and practically applicable to the guidance of the life we are all living. Looked at in this way, the stress and emphasis of Christ's teaching does not appear to lie in the announcement of a mysterious Trinity, or of a theory of Redemption by blood, or in the founding of an infallible Church, or in the institution of any rites or ceremonies, but in the inculcation of love and goodwill among men, who are all sons of one Father —their sonship to be practically shown by burdening others as little as possible, and doing as much as possible ourselves: devoting one's talents, not to the service of mammon, but to the service of righteousness.

This view being totally different from that taught by the Holy Orthodox Russian Church, caused the peasants to cease going to church, and also caused the revenues of the village priests to shrink; and Church and State leaning upon each other for mutual support, a persecution was commenced, and Prince Hilkóff was exiled to the Caucasus. There he fell in with the Doukhobórs, whose views coincided with his own; and after a time the authorities found it advisable to re-exile

him to an out-of-the-way part of the Baltic Provinces.* His children have been taken from him, to be brought up in the true religion professed by M. Pobedonóstseff and the Most Holy Synod.

The English Government would not have persecuted Prince Hilkóff; but, on the other hand, have we a Prince Hilkóff to persecute? How does the activity of our most Radical peers compare with his? Not, of course, that such men are common in Russia either (how seldom does a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven anywhere); but among the common Russian peasants there are many who, though they have not had to renounce so much, see things eye to eye with Hilkóff, and bear it patiently when men hate them and separate them from their company, and reproach them and cast out their name as evil, in the same manner as they acted to the prophets of old. Such men would neither put up a fence to protect private property in land, nor serve as soldiers or policemen to enforce "legal rights," nor be lawyers to plead the cause of those who can pay for it, nor judges to administer iniquitous laws, nor politicians to set an example of quarrelling where what is wanted is an example of useful and self-sacrificing work, nor priests claiming an endowment and petrifying the beliefs of one age to check the advance of the next.

* Since the above was written he has been allowed to leave Russia (but not to return thither), and has taken an active part in settling the Doukhobórs in Canada.

There are two different and incompatible lines of advance — the one followed (to take a prominent instance), say, by Gladstone, which is that of aiming at immediate practical results by legal enactments. It may not be always useless, but what has been made legal is not always right, and what has been made illegal is not always wrong; it generates much friction, is disappointing in its results, and sets no example which all men can follow. It is a line which can, indeed, hardly be pursued except by men who have divorced themselves from the universal duty of man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The other line, followed by such men as Paul, Wyclif, or George Fox, and most conspicuously by Jesus, is that of doing what is right and speaking what is true, leaving the results to be enforced, not by the policeman, but by the Eternal. Who can ever measure or tell what results have followed, or will follow, from any action or example? And is it not best to leave the calculations of expediency to those who do not believe that truth is great and shall prevail.

Even on a lower plane, do we not see that the quiet and thoughtful work, say of Adam Smith for instance, has had far more wide-reaching effects, even in the making and altering of laws, than the labours of six hundred and seventy members of Parliament, with all their election committees and political campaigns, for the last ten years? And however much the influence of the advance of the physical sciences on the

happiness of the human race has been overrated, is it not certain that Newton and Darwin have done more to liberate mankind from the thraldom of an ignorant and bigoted priesthood than could be effected by a dozen church-disestablishment bills?

But "What is truth?" asks not Pilate only, but all thoughtful men who have pierced to the heart of the materialistic philosophy of the day, hoping in it to find solid ground to build on.

God, say they, is a reflection of himself which man has cast upon the clouds. Granted that there may be a great first cause of all things, we can know nothing of it, and must leave it completely out of our reckoning. What we can know, is matter and its movements; what we can know of higher forms of life towards which man may be tending, must be learnt by studying the evolution of lower forms which he has already surpassed. Morality is a question of expediency: it is one thing for the ants, another for the bees, and a dozen different things for man, according to his race and climate and surroundings. Do not, therefore, elevate your whims and guesses and fancies into the decrees of an "Eternal who makes for righteousness."

That is about as far as the materialistic philosopher cares to go in his public speech or writings; it is perhaps as far as some of them care to penetrate, even in their own thoughts. But get an intellectually honest and sincere materialist, who will not shirk the issue (nor, like so many

intellectually dishonest Christians, simply refuse to discuss his beliefs), and you come to something further, which marks the real dividing line between a thoroughly consistent materialist and a spiritualist (if I may use that word to denote one who thinks that conscience and reason afford indications of eternal truth). He will say that what we see around us is a huge evolutionary process, tending we know not whence or whither, that we can not stop it, and whether we go against it and are wiped out, or go with it and are wiped out, does not really seem to matter much; for the power (which he ignores in his speculations as unknowable) will certainly destroy first you and me, then the human race and the earth itself, and eventually the whole solar system to which we belong. All our morality is but relative; probably there is no such thing as absolute right or wrong, and no such thing as moral truth or falsehood, or, if there be, we are probably quite incapable of grasping them.

That, really, is the root of the whole matter. Is anything true? Is anything right or wrong?

We may, with the thoroughgoing materialist, assume that there are no such things as righteousness or moral truth (indeed, accepting his assertion that conscience gives us no perception of the Eternal, I do not see how that conclusion can logically be avoided); and having assumed that, it does not seem to matter much what else we assume for the short remainder of our days. Or we may take up the spiritual hypothesis that there

is an eternal right, truth leading towards it, and that our minds and consciences are so framed that if we are intellectually honest, and strive to act up to what we know, we can obtain such glimpses of these eternal truths as are needful to enable us to steer our course aright through our brief sojourn here.

The distant mountain does not look the same to all eyes, or from all points of view, but it is one and the same, and we can approach towards it if we will.

One of these two conclusions the thoughtful man, who goes unflinchingly to the heart of the matter, must ultimately reach—even if he takes it first on trial merely, as a working hypothesis. Afterwards—by its fruits shall ye judge it. Once assume that we dwell, not in a chaos, but in a universe designed for objects which transcend our comprehension, and one can work quietly at what the great taskmaster sets before us. Expediency and tangible success lose their importance, and even death for ourselves and extinction for our race cease to be the inexplicable curse from the very thought of which we sought to escape.

Now, to return to the coronation. No one I have met attempts to justify it as reasonable, right, or necessary in itself—the sham and tinsel of the whole affair was too obvious; but many try to explain that it was expedient or necessary, as being likely to impress the people or the foreign visitors. Some Russians thought it

would favourably impress foreigners, and some foreigners excused it as necessary to impress the semi-savage delegates from Asiatic Russia. What was especially noticeable, however, was the disinclination of most people to consider anything more than the mere surface of the event. The thought, lurking at the back of their minds, seemed to be: If we admit that our social system is founded on selfishness and wrong, and that the Government exists in order that the rich may oppress the poor, what will happen? what have we to put in place of the present system?

Well, whether we speak the truth or whether we lie, whether we worship God or mammon, we none of us know what will happen; we can, however, see the past more clearly than the future. Suppose, then, that a Roman slave-owner had realised that though Paul wrote "Slaves, obey your masters," yet slavery was wrong. He would have been tempted to ask, "But how will the abolition of slavery work?" "Who will ever labour at slavish tasks, unless a whip is held over him?" He would be apt to say, "Even with continual flogging, my slaves can hardly be got to do a decent day's work, any of them." And he would ask, "How, for instance, can woollen cloth ever get made if there are no slaves to pasture the sheep, or to shear them or wash them, or make the fleeces into bundles, or spin it into yarn, or weave it into cloth, or to dye it?" Had he tried to forecast in

his mind what a modern Yorkshire mill would be like, he would have failed completely. Yet the conclusion presented by his conscience was right. Slavery was bad, economically as well as morally; and the emancipation of slaves has not impoverished the world, nor left us without cloth.

In such problems, the question of conscience and motive is the one we are capable of forming a sound judgment on — not the question of the results of actions. And whether we believe that conscience is a guide to be consulted and followed, depends again on whether we believe that there is a Power "lasting through the ages, which makes for righteousness," and which acts upon us.

As to the moral revolution which is now fermenting in many lands, especially with regard to economic questions, it can neither be helped nor hindered by shams and lies,—and surely, as to this revolution, it behoves all men to take heed what side they are on; for "if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it be of God, ye will not be able to overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God."

Moscow, *June* 1896.

The above formed the "Epilogue" to "The Tsar's Coronation" (Brotherhood Publishing Co.), the other chapters

of which, written when the events described were still fresh, form a valid indictment of state-pageantry, but one, I fear, written with too much animus, and too little good-will towards the wrong-doers.

RIGHT AND WRONG

WHEN I was about thirty-seven years old I acted in a manner of which I had always disapproved. I had known of other people acting in the same way, and had always felt that they were doing wrong. It was in sex matters that I sinned, and the case was the more startling because I had been guilty of no outwardly wrong action of the kind since I was quite a young man, and for about a year before the lapse I had been stirred by a strong desire to change my whole way of life and be of more use in the world than heretofore. And the question arose—Was I to confess my conduct to those whose lives were linked to mine and whom I could not wound without lacerating myself? or had I better conceal it?

If I told them the truth it would hurt them and I should fall in their esteem, while, on the other hand, by not telling them I should be entering on a course of concealment which would easily lead to untruthfulness and ultimately, perhaps, to systematic deception.

I had from childhood kept a clear perception that truth is better than falsehood, and the feelings which had grown up on this opinion caused me now to be frank; and as soon as I had confessed, and saw how the knowledge of my conduct

acted on those who were nearest to me, it became obvious that I must not repeat my misconduct. All the excuses and justifications which seemed so plausible while I was looking at the matter from my own point of view—swayed by a strong personal bias,—vanished when I had to face the case as it really stood, and saw that it affected not one or two people only, but necessarily reacted upon all with whom they were in touch.

I had in fact run up against the root question of human conduct: Is there a right and a wrong? I had assumed that it is right to tell the truth and wrong to tell lies, and this had decided for me another important question of conduct. Evidently each part of our conduct is linked on to all the rest. Morality (*i.e.* right conduct) relates to all we do, and knits our life into one organic whole. We cannot be moral in one thing and irresponsible in another. If right and wrong can be predicated of human actions at all, they relate to all our actions—and we cannot separate out some one section of life (our family, our business life, our sexual relations, our friendships and enmities, our amusements, or our studies) and say that in this department we wish to be free from the rule of right and wrong.

I was resident at that time in Russia where such problems are discussed with great frankness, and with these thoughts working in my mind it came natural to me to speak of them to some personal friends. I found that more than one acquaintance had gone through experiences similar to my own,

but not all of them had felt it necessary or desirable to confess their actions. This one, and that one, had chosen the path of concealment, the ultimate consequences of which were not yet apparent. For convenience sake let me speak as though the considerations which were presented to me, and claimed my attention, all came from one and the same friend.

I pleaded that surely truth is better than falsehood. This my friend would not admit to be necessarily so; he said he had become convinced that our ideas of morality are conventional. He recognised an evolutionary process going on in the world. Some power of which we know nothing, for reasons we cannot discern, ages ago evolved enormous antediluvian animals with tremendous teeth and claws adapted to their environment, and enabling them to fight — which was what they were destined for. When the power (Nature) had done with them, it wiped them all out and continued its process of evolving fresh types, which it successively used up and wiped out. Among the rest came man. To man nature has not given such terrible teeth and claws, but it has furnished him with faculties which adapt him also to his environment. It has given him a conscience and a capacity to feel sympathy and love. These, he said, are evidently mere adaptations of the primitive tribal instincts of the savage, which, in turn, were adaptations of the sexual and maternal instincts of the animals. Love is a lubricant designed to enable

the machinery of human society to work without too much friction. It is merely one more adaptation of creatures to their environment, just as were the teeth and claws of the antediluvian monsters. What we call "promptings of conscience" are merely inherited habits, the results of the fear of punishment transmitted through the nervous system.

My friend stated the matter somewhat in this way:—

"We do not understand this Nature of which we are a part, nor do we know its purpose. An earthquake swallows up a town; the bird tears the worm to pieces; the beautiful rainbow represents both the fruitful and life-giving rain, and the destructive and life-destroying flood which sweeps the helpless child from its despairing mother.

"Deify this Nature if you like; talk, as the sentimentalists do, of the perfect harmony which (they say) exists, or will some day exist, between what is going on in Nature, and what we feel would satisfy us. Or, like Moses, say that an all-good and all-powerful God created this world as we see it and pronounced it to be quite satisfactory; or, like the pessimists, curse Nature for her heartless cruelty, for being 'red in tooth and claw.' But for those of us who care to be at all truthful in the matter, the plain fact remains that we simply do not know what Nature is aiming at; many of her processes and operations are terrible, shocking and revolting to what we are accustomed

to call 'our best feelings,' and we do not even know whether Nature is aiming at anything at all.

"We may dislike death, decay, destruction, and misery—but they exist and have to be reckoned with. All the efforts to believe, as the Greeks did, in a beautiful harmony of Nature, like the Jewish attempts to believe in a good God who overrules all things for the best, are merely attempts to lull ourselves into a comfortable state of mind. They are not rational beliefs but Epicurean consolations — a kind of intellectual opium-eating.

"We are infinitesimally small parts of an infinitely large whole which we do not understand. If we knew the scheme of creation we might be able to see how *we* fit into it, and whether our life has or has not any meaning. But not understanding the plan and purpose of the whole machine, it is hopeless to ask what this or that particular little wheel is for. We are simply groping in the dark, and when we speak of right and wrong we are only deceiving ourselves. Not knowing what Nature has designed us for, we cannot know whether it is more moral to oppose her in her designs and be wiped out, or to assist her in her plans and equally be wiped out.

"For science tells us (only men dislike what is unpleasant, and therefore this is often slurred over or kept in the background) that not only is death inevitable, both for ourselves and our friends, but that the human race itself will come

to an end, and the earth will perish, and the whole solar system will pass away. No doctor ever yet *saved* any life; the utmost he could by any possibility do was to postpone the inevitable death. All the progress people talk about is progress towards the destruction of the world and the termination of the race.

"Reason, conscience, and love, therefore, are expedients, adaptations designed by nature for her own unknown purposes, but, more than this, they are merely *temporary* expedients. There is nothing permanent about them. What is called the 'soul' or the 'spirit' is to the body what the flame is to a candle—a result of its gradual combustion. The 'spirit' can no more continue to exist after the body has decomposed than the flame can go on burning after the candle has been consumed.

"Some people are fond of advising you to develop powers, and form habits which tend towards life —and to shun others which tend towards death. But this is a fallacious manner of expressing oneself, for none of our faculties or habits tend anywhere but towards ultimate death. The difference is only that some paths lead to the goal more quickly than others.

"So far from any clear rule of right or morality being discernible in the operations of Nature, nothing of the kind exists even in the mind of man. Human morality is merely conventional. It differs not only from the morality of the bees and the ants and other animals, but even among

men themselves what is right in one age is wrong in another, and what is moral in one country is immoral in another. Under the Mosaic law it was right to slaughter one's national enemies and to have a hundred wives. In modern England most people are shocked if you have even half-a-dozen wives, and though many people still admire a Cecil Rhodes for 'painting the map of Africa red' with human blood, some people begin to disapprove of killing men, and of regarding the lives of foreigners as being less sacred than the lives of one's own countrymen."

My friend instanced to me a case in which his own conscience had led him wrong. He had been brought up to think it wrong to read novels on Sunday. When he was a young man he wanted to read a novel on Sunday, and did so, but his conscience made him perfectly wretched about it. This, however, only lasted till he had become accustomed to reading novels on Sunday. Then he perceived that he "had been hampered by a ridiculous Jewish superstition, the power of which was called conscience."

"There is a continual shifting and surging of opinions backwards and forwards, now to the left hand, and now to the right. Under such circumstances, only the fanatic will try to dogmatise, and only the ascetic will forgo the few pleasures, not harmful to our physical life, which are open to us."

Again my friend argued: "Even admitting that we could discern right from wrong, could we

alter our conduct? Could we be any better or any worse than we are?

"In nature there is no effect without an antecedent cause. Whatever is now going on in the world is the effect of what was happening millions of years ago. We have been shaped to what we are by the combined influence of soil and climate acting on our food and our surroundings, and on those of our ancestors for thousands of generations. There is no spot on your body, no atom in your brain, no thought that rises within you, but is an inevitable result of antecedent physical causes; that cause may be what you had for dinner yesterday (causing indigestion and irritability), but even the way you ate your yesterday's dinner was influenced by what your remote ancestors fed on millions of years ago, when the foundations were laid of the character you have inherited.

"Is it not sheer self-conceit and self-deception to imagine that we can counteract the accumulated results of all these antecedent causes, which have been operating steadily through the ages. Can we work miracles? Can we bid the sun stand still? or (what is equally impossible) say to the inevitable result which must follow from what has gone before—'Thou shalt not be!' We fancy we are free to act only because we do not see the threads by which we are moved—in reality we are mere automata."

It is always painful to disagree on the funda-

mental problems of life and conduct with those whom you respect and care for. It was so in this case, and, moreover, a dread haunted me that perhaps the power which had presented these problems to me, and given me a desire to solve them, and a perception that their solution was necessary, had yet left me incapable of solving them,—as a fish is sometimes left on dry land, a few feet from the river, struggling and gasping for the water it is unable to reach.

This fear disappeared when I came to face the difficulties seriously. There was much that I could not solve or fathom, but what man needs to know in order to steer his course aright can be found by those who really seek it. The difficulty (it now seems to me) lies not so much in perceiving what is right, as in doing it. But thought is enormously important, because it is to man what the rudder is to a ship: it gives the direction. The tide may carry the ship to one side, the wind may even drive it back, but that does not mean that it is unimportant how the ship is steered. Unless it be steered rightly, what hope is there of reaching harbour? So it is with man. His actions result from his feelings, but his feelings grow up rooted on his sense of the meaning of life.

Thoughts such as those expressed by my friend do not often trouble plain, honest folk, but they colour and influence the minds of many of the sophisticated and over-instructed people of our day; and what makes them perplexing is that

they contain a certain proportion of truth, and are often mixed up with theories and conclusions which are valid.

Pure gold is easily distinguishable from amalgam, but it is difficult to separate the one from the other in a coin. So with a man's view of life. What is true and what is false may be easily distinguished if they are once separated: perplexity arises from having them intermixed.

What I first felt about my friend's arguments was that it would not do for me to yield to them, for if I admitted them I should never know what to like and what to dislike, what to do and what not to do. But no sooner did this thought form itself than I felt ashamed of it. I felt (not with my reason only but with my whole being) that: "Truth is great and shall prevail": that to truth we must be ready to say, "Though thou shouldst slay me, yet will I love thee." A passage from Huxley recurred to my memory: "Granting that a religious creed would be beneficial, my next step is to ask for a proof of the dogma. If this is forthcoming it is my conviction that no drowning sailor ever clutched a hen-coop more tenaciously than mankind will hold by such dogma, whatever it may be. But if not, then I verily believe that the human race will go its own evil way; and my only consolation lies in the reflection that however bad our posterity may become, so long as they hold by the plain rule of not pretending to believe what they see no reason to believe, because it may be to their

advantage so to pretend, they will not have reached the lowest depths of immorality."

Yes, surely! No pleasure, no expediency, no profit, no utility, will ever justify us in believing in the existence of right and wrong if it be true indeed that modern thought (Science) has demonstrated that we are but parts of an inscrutable whole, that we and our race must perish utterly, body and spirit,—that all morality is merely conventional, and that even our conscience and our reason are but inevitable results of integrations and disintegrations of matter over which we have no control.

The view of life which my friend represented flows logically enough, I think, from the materialistic or synthetic philosophy which is to the fore in our day.

We are surrounded by something which we call the material universe. The perceptions which reach us through our five senses reveal to us an order of Nature. What we perceive seems to obey fixed and definite laws which we can investigate. Our own bodies, and even our brains, belong to this external universe which we know through our senses, and the evolutionary and synthetic philosophy deals with all this. It goes further and undertakes to tell us all that can be known of the spirit in man. The mainspring of life, the prime mover, it speaks of as the "unknown and the unknowable," and it invites us to dismiss it from our thoughts in order to concentrate our attention on the knowable.

This philosophy professes to cover the whole ground of human knowledge, and as long as I admitted that claim, and looked to it for guidance in my own conduct, it baffled and perplexed me. My friend, on the basis of this philosophy, demonstrated the absurdity of believing in an absolute right and wrong, and Herbert Spencer, in the fourth great volume ("Justice,") of the fifth great section ("Principles of Ethics") of his great scheme of *Synthetic Philosophy*, on this same basis seeks to demonstrate that the existing system of landholding (by which the people who till the land of England do not possess it, but live under the control of those who do) is one which practically accords with the principles of justice!

I could not help suspecting that when it deals with such questions the synthetic philosophy oversteps the limits within which it is competent.

I next came to perceive that what the synthetic philosophy neglects is the "subjective" view of life. This view regards "the spirit in man" actuating his reason and his conscience, as being the most real of all things. This spirit is the divine in man—a something durable, permanent, and reliable. By means of it we are constituted judges—having knowledge of good and evil. It is the "true life" the "life eternal" (in Christ's language) for the sake of which the physical life may well be sacrificed. Compared to this, all that reaches us through our five senses is external, foreign to us, unsatisfactory, changeable, temporary. This subjective view has been held, and

dwelt on, by all the great religious teachers who have ever moved the hearts of men: by Socrates, Lao-Tsze, Buddha, Christ, Paul, Wesley, Woolman, Tolstoy, and by a host of others whose influence spreads from age to age and from continent to continent.

Now, the question before us is this: "Is there any real *Right*—absolute, firm, immovable, durable; belonging to a real, eternal order of things?" And this raises the further questions: Is there something in each of us which is linked indissolubly to that real eternal order? Are we, therefore, brethren? Moved by the same spirit? Owing allegiance to the same truth and the same duty?

Will the synthetic philosophy suffice to enable us to answer these questions? It professes to answer all the questions to which mankind possesses any answer. It regards primarily what is *external*—what can be perceived and investigated through the five senses. It calls these things *realities* and *facts*, and it holds out hopes that by means of these it will explain also your innermost perceptions; and it warns you that every other method is mere self-deception.

And, indeed, to many of us, at first, this outer world does seem more solid and real than the inner world of our consciousness. We are, at first, inclined to disbelieve the teachers who tell us that the external is deceptive, unreliable, and temporary, and that the inner life alone is reliable and permanent. We are ready to call them

"Mystics," and to put their teaching aside as unsatisfactory. Only after much thought do we begin to perceive to what an extent the external world deceives, baffles, and perplexes us. The mere number of facts relating to this external world is literally infinite, and we can know only a very few of them. Even a Newton may well admit that he is like a little child picking up pebbles by the shore of the ocean of the unknown.

Even in the things we thought we knew, how often we are deceived! To borrow an example: you enter a room, a looking-glass fills one end of it and you advance to speak to a lady you see there—till you touch the glass, and your hand tells you that your eye has deceived you. When this happens we call it an "optical illusion." But there are cases in which we find our different senses combining to deceive us, and we then call it a "fact." And as most men have senses similar to ours, when one man's senses deceive him he will easily find plenty of other people to confirm him in his error, and when the people who have made a special study of the matter are deceived, it becomes a "scientific fact." For thousands of years the earth was flat, and the sun rose in the east and sank in the west each day. And how sure people usually are of their "scientific facts," —until a fresh generation sweeps them into the rubbish heap. Have we not (particularly those of us who had not themselves investigated it) felt sure that the "Law of Gravity" was something quite certainly and absolutely true?—and

does not Edward Carpenter now show us that it is "a projection into a monstrous universality and abstraction, of partially understood phenomena in a particular region of observation?"* We are beginning to understand that the "laws of science" are not absolutely, but at best only relatively true.

Again, how sure most people are that the trees are green. Someone with an eye rather differently shaped sees red trees where I see green ones. But being in a majority I say that he has a defect of the eye called Daltonism. Really, so far as science has guessed at present, the tree is neither green nor red. Certain waves of light pass from it to our eyes. These waves impinge on the retina, the nerves pass on a sensation to our brain, and we say we see green trees. If the other shape of eye were more common, trees would be red.

Under the materialistic philosophy "matter and force" are the ultimate. Our investigation of them has to decide what importance we should attach to man's spirit: reason, conscience, and judging-faculty.

The contrary philosophy (call it Socratic, or Christian, as you please) discerns the essential difference between *that which perceives* and *that which is perceived,* and while it recognises and includes what can be known of the external universe, admits the validity of the inductive method of investigating nature and recognises

* "Modern Science—a Criticism," published in the volume of essays entitled "Civilisation, its Cause and Cure."

that we learn and are developed by what we perceive, yet instead of looking to the external to decide for us what we are to regard as good or bad, it holds that all we perceive has to be judged by the spirit of man.

Pascal has put the essential position thus:

"Man is but a reed, the feeblest of things—but he is a thinking reed. The whole universe need not rise in order to crush him. A vapour, or a drop of water, is sufficient to kill him. But when the universe crushes him, man still remains nobler than that which kills him, because he knows that he is dying, while of the advantage the universe has over him it knows nothing. Thus, all our dignity consists in *thought*. It is by that, and not by time or space, that we should raise ourselves. Let us therefore labour to think rightly: that is the principle of morality."

From the synthetic philosophy we get no clear guidance: only a piling up of so-called "facts" and a process of generalising on these "facts:" different authorities coming to different conclusions, perplexing the intellect but not stirring the heart. The subjective view said that there is a divine life present in each of us. We must realise that it is our true self. In *it* and not in our physical existence resides true, real, permanent *life*. Trust it, use it, perceive that it is the ultimate from which there is no appeal; realise that the same spirit lives in you as lives in all your brother men—and you have grasped the

master-key to all the problems of morality, ethics, and religion.

This is the crux of the whole matter: each man must look within himself and say whether he is conscious of a power approving and disapproving —seeking for what is good. If a man be not conscious of it, if the idea seem to him mystical, unreal, fantastic,—then morality, as I understand it, can have no meaning for him. But if he recognise this life, or light, or spirit, or soul, or divine spark, or divinity (call it what you will) in himself, he possesses the essential basis of morality and religion.

Is there or is there not a right and wrong discernible to you and to me, and incumbent upon us both? If we use our minds freely (not swayed by prejudices nor overmastered by our physical nature) can we, or can we not, understand each other, sympathise with each other, aid each other spiritually, and advance hand in hand together?

If not, we can never more approve or disapprove of any man's conduct, never be moved by admiration of any self-sacrifice, nor be touched by righteous indignation at any wrong. If I have no judging-faculty, capable of discerning right and wrong, I must remain neutral, and divide my approbation and sympathy equally between the Judas who betrays, the High Priest who prosecutes, the Pilate who condemns, and the Jesus who sacrifices himself for the truth. If there be no right and no wrong, or if they be not such as a plain man may find, or if they be

different for different men—then, not only the teaching of Christ, but every other attempt that ever has been made to supply direction or guidance to mankind must be futile.

The problem is a tremendous one: (1) On the one hand, admit the existence of an absolute right incumbent on each of us, and it follows that there exists a real, secure, and permanent spiritual order of things to which we are linked by the spirit in us which recognises right and wrong. (2) On the other hand, deny the existence of an absolute right and wrong, and it inevitably follows that all our discussions and efforts to influence each other are senseless.

But, important as the problem is, the solution is simple. We only need to consider the facts of our own nature, facts of which we cannot but be conscious, and we shall plainly see that we do distinguish right from wrong. Which of us when he reads the story of Socrates does not admire him for speaking the truth boldly before his judges. Which of us is unable to perceive that Jabez Balfour did wrong when he devoured widows' houses and for a pretence made long prayers? Do not the great and good who are gone reach their hands to us across the ages, making us feel that (however dormant it may be) in our innermost selves there dwells some spark of that divine nature which made them heroes, saints, and martyrs—that we, too (however unworthily), are sons of the same spirit.

It still remains to meet my friend's arguments,

which, after this preparation, will perhaps not prove a difficult task.

1. Conscience and love, we are told, are mere results of the physical activities and chemical mobilities of matter operating through ages.

Have you ever seen a conjuror make a ball vanish? First, he lets you examine a solid ball, then he manages to substitute a collapsible trick ball for the real one, and rolling it between his hands it gradually becomes smaller and smaller till at last you can't see what has become of it.

That is very much like what the materialist does with conscience. Conscience is something real and actual, which influences me and of which I am subjectively conscious. The philosopher comes along and undertakes to make this conscience disappear. This he does by substituting for the thing itself—of which we have knowledge at first hand and not through our senses — the external phenomena which accompany the existence of a conscience. Passing then from the phenomena which indicate that I, and the people I know, have consciences, to similar external phenomena which indicate that other people, further removed from me, had consciences, he gradually leads us further and further from what is familiar and sure, to what is distant and unknown, till at last we reach the primitive tribe, the apes, the bees, and the ants, and, past them, the colloid or jelly-like substances in which physical life is supposed to have commenced. Here we have quite lost sight of conscience. In-

stead of speaking about the thing itself (the power which influences our conduct) he has discussed its derivation, and asked where it comes from. Starting with the fundamental confusion of supposing that something subjective (like conscience) can be explained by the objective methods of biology, physics, or chemistry—he ends up by informing you of the important fact that your conscience proceeds from chemical activities and physical mobilities, the question how we ought to use our conscience remaining unanswered.

2. Next we are told that Nature (of which we are parts) is non-moral and inscrutable.

Well, I am prepared to admit that Nature appears to me to be non-moral. I may devise plausible guesses to explain the earthquake or the flood, but if, in order to know how to act, I had objectively to observe all nature, to accumulate myriads of facts, to generalise from them, and by searching to find out the purpose of creation, I should despair of ever accomplishing the task, and should be ready to admit that we cannot know right from wrong. We do not know the whole design of the universe, and we should beware of involving ourselves in logical perplexities by asserting (as Moses did) that God created the earth, or by saying (as the nature-worshippers do) that all the ways of nature commend themselves to our moral sense. We should content ourselves with making sure of what is necessary and sufficient, and should not assert what is questionable and cannot be verified.

But putting aside the ambitious design of fathoming the mind of the *All*,—admitting that we, being *finite*, cannot grasp or span the *infinite* —let us turn from what we cannot know to what we do know. Commune with the spirit that is within you, and you will find that as the bird knows how to live in the air, and is not perplexed how to act, and as the fish is able to live in the water, and knows what to do there, so man too can live his life, guided in its problems by the spirit within him, and not unconscious that that same spirit links us, not only to our fellow-men, but also to the faithful horse or trusty dog, and makes us desire more comprehension of, and union with, the flowers, the grass, and all that exists.

This does not mean that if man voluntarily indulges in ethical conundrums which have no real application to his own life—he will always be able to solve them. I remember being asked what an Eskimo should do who saw the force of the vegetarian's objection to taking life, but who found that he would die if he ceased to eat whale's blubber. I had to give it up; because I am not an Eskimo, and do not find it necessary to live on whale's blubber. His course would depend on the strength of his conviction, and on his readiness to sacrifice physical existence for spiritual well-being.

3. Again, as to the temporary, and consequently unsatisfactory, nature of human existence.

This is, I think, a very important point in my friend's position, for it links the question of the

reality of right and wrong to the question whether the spirit of which we are conscious in ourselves is *finite* or *infinite*. There are people who wish to admit the existence of right and wrong, but who incline to the belief that we perish utterly at the death of our body, leaving behind only our dust and our influence, which in its turn will perish when the world is used up and the sun cools down. They think Christ must have been romancing if he ever said he could show us life eternal, that being a matter we can know nothing about.

They say that life is to the body what the flame is to the candle. But the analogy is misleading. The difference is that the flame has no choice as to what it will do with the candle: it *really* depends on chemical activities and physical mobilities. But man's spirit (which is his real life) can and does enable him to decide that he will drown himself out of jealousy, risk his life for patriotism, or go to the stake for truth's sake. For the analogy to be complete, the flame of the candle would have to approve or disapprove of the stearin.

A truer analogy, I believe, would be to compare man's life to an electrical installation. When a good lamp is well attached a bright and steady light is shown, if the lamp be badly attached the flame is irregular, and when the lamp is broken the light goes out. But the electric current (man's life or spirit) continues to flow with equal power whether the lamp (man's body) be sound, or injured, or destroyed.

For those, however, who accept the materialist's point of view, my friend's argument should, I think, be conclusive. It is unreasonable to believe in any absolute right and wrong if our existence is only temporary. Logically it does not matter whether the arrangement lasts, say, for twenty years, till the death of the individual; or for millions of years, till the extinction of the race. If our spirit be the product of our brain, and our brain be admittedly perishable, what have we to do with the eternal? Right and wrong belong to the domain of the infinite. Morality depends upon that stream of tendency which makes for righteousness yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

It needs, however, to be pointed out, that to say, as Christ did, that man has eternal life, is not the same as asserting as a fact, as the Buddhists do, that men will be re-incarnated, or as the European churches do, that men will rise from the dead and have a personal immortality. These (however plausible the one or the other may be) are hypotheses which cannot be verified; and, dogmatically asserted, they have produced a very natural reaction, and inclined men towards mere negation. The influence of this reaction is perceptible around us to-day. The basis, however, on which Christ, or Socrates, built in this matter still stands firm, and this much at least we have, many of us, found in our own experience of life — that while we are chiefly occupied with the physical and material side of life we need constant occupation and stimulant to keep us from perceiv-

ing the approach of death; but when we are occupied with the spirit, and are following after that which is good, the fear of death finds no place, and we need no such pre-occupation or hypnotic influence to blind us to it.

4. Next as to what my friend said about the instability of the moral code.

It is true that no code of external rules exists which would fit all men in all ages. But observe the working of your own mind, and it is easy to see why this is so. What we desire and seek is perfection. No sooner is one step gained than it becomes necessary to take another. Morality (by which I mean right conduct) does not consist in reaching an attainable spot and stagnating there, but, on the contrary, it consists in movement forward. Through the ages men have been travelling along converging lines towards one ultimate aim —the City of God.

If we are walking from York to London, would it not be unreasonable to tell us that we must be going wrong because yesterday we were anxious to reach and rest at Grantham, while to-day we are entering Peterboro'? The immutability lies in the ultimate aim—when we approached Grantham we were making for London, and so we are when we have pushed on to Peterboro'.

The owner who begins to have some compassion for his slaves; the owner who lets his slaves go free; the woman who makes a friend of her servant; the rich man who chooses a life of poverty for conscience sake; the Father Damien

who gives his life for the lepers — all are alike moving towards the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Which direction we should move in, is no insoluble enigma. When anyone tells us that morality is mutable, that we are left without guidance, and cannot know right from wrong, the reply is one which was given thousands of years ago: "It is not too hard for thee, neither is it too far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

5. But we are told conscience veers round, as in the case of my friend with his Sunday novel.

Is not the case this? He had been accustomed to be guided by the authority of his elders, and to use his own judging faculty merely within prescribed limits. Then he became conscious of a conflict between his own reason and the dictates of authority. He should have faced the problem squarely, and cleared his own mind. Finding (as all may find who will think about it) that a man can and must think with his own head, he would have been free to choose his path, and have felt no further compunctions about following it. His conscience troubled him, I take it, rather

because he shirked the problem than because he read the novel. Ultimately he did think for himself, and then his conscience was at rest.

We are all too apt to be intellectually lazy, shirking the problems of life, and saying we do not know the solutions. We are all too apt to be intellectually dishonest, not thinking *freely* about the questions life puts before us, but allowing a secret bias for some friend, or book, or creed, or church, or occupation, or amusement to swerve us from following straight after truth. We are too apt to be intellectually cowardly, not believing that our minds were given us to be used, and that they are worth using and trusting.

6. Lastly, my friend contended that our thoughts, feelings, and actions are pre-determined and inevitable results of what went before.

This is just where the man, whose view of life includes the subjective perception of his own inner consciousness, finds himself at issue with all the philosophic systems which try to confine themselves to a knowledge of what can be studied through the five senses of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and feeling. The root of the whole matter is, that if we know ourselves we perceive an inward spirit preferring good to evil. As Tolstoy puts it: "Goodness is really the fundamental metaphysical conception which forms the essence of our consciousness; it is a conception not defined by reason, it is that which can be defined by nothing else but which defines everything else; it is the highest, the eternal aim of our life."

Examining my own inner perceptions, I believe I possess a will. We do not know *why* or *how* the spirit operates upon the physical brain, which, but for that incoming life, would be merely automatic. Neither science nor inspiration have shown us how to produce life, or explained its secret to us. The dilemma is that we must assume (1) either that we are automata, or (2) that we possess some measure of will: and with the facts of life before me I am driven to assume that I possess some measure of will. We may reject religion as a superstition, morality as a delusion, and duty as a fallacy, yet we shall continue to desire and strive for something, if for nothing better than for the gratification of some personal caprice, or the satisfaction of some physical want.

We are not free from the limitations of time and space, nor are we free from the influences of heredity, environment, soil, and climate: my body is a result of what occurred before I was born. And this is what should save us from harshly judging one another. "Judge not that ye be not judged" would be sound and sensible advice, even if it were shown that no Christ ever spoke it. For all judging of the kind we ourselves might reasonably try to escape from—*i.e.* all judging in which the judge assumes a position of superiority or seeks to inflict any penalty, is, it seems to me, an evil. On the other hand, "Judge righteous judgments" is not less necessary advice; for by seeking to perceive the truth regarding ourselves and others, and about our mutual relations to each

other, we can best learn the lessons of life: learn to understand and escape from our own faults and learn to help others.

Very much has been pre-determined for us. It seems impossible that we should relapse into cannibalism, and equally impossible to live up to the level of the highest truths we have seen.

We are like travellers who have passed through many miles of forest and who can neither leap, at a bound, back to the entrance, nor overleap the many miles which still lie before them. They are not free to do the impossible, but they are free to select the direction in which they will move. They can continue to advance, or can swerve to the right or left, or can even turn back in despair.

The above are my perceptions as to the existence of right and wrong. If they be erroneous I hope someone will explain to me my mistakes; if they be true I hope these thoughts may prove useful to some who still are, as I till recently was, perplexed on the subject. Assuming them to be in the main correct, I feel drawn to make an application of them with reference to the "advanced" people with whom I have come in contact since I settled in England.

If there is such a thing as right, there must also be such a thing as morality: conduct tending towards the right, conduct that makes for the establishment of perfect relations among men, and the establishment of the Kingdom of Righteous-

ness. This being so, it is surely of supreme importance to discern the right, if any exist, as clearly as possible. Progress is only desirable if it be progress in the right direction. History shows us that all past civilisations progressed towards destruction. We, therefore, must realise that to progress is not sufficient: we must know *what we are progressing towards*, that is to say, we must seek for a clear perception of the truth as to what is right and what is wrong in human conduct. It is not enough to rid ourselves of conventional ideas, prejudices, authorities, and legalities; we must look well to it that these are replaced by a clear, well-verified perception of what we are aiming at. For the house swept and garnished and left empty was soon occupied by seven devils worse than the first.

Before we are fit to destroy the old, or can do even that efficiently, we must first know what we seek: what we hold to be right: towards what ideal we are striving. This is true equally of the economic and the sexual sides of life.

If you have perceived that, despite the struggle for existence which is said to be a "law of Nature," mankind is slowly, through the ages, climbing—through cannibalism, slavery, feudal tenure, serfdom, wagedom—towards the brotherhood of man, and if your spirit approves that advance, and longs to aid it, the time has come when you can profitably use your perception of the absurdity of human law, and the iniquities of competitive business. There is then no danger that you wil

encourage others to forge bank-notes, because you see the wrong involved in banking.

If you have perceived that, despite that struggle for sexual union which we are told is a "law of Nature," mankind has slowly, through the ages, climbed — through unnatural vice, promiscuity, varietism, polygamy, polyandry, monogamy,— towards greater and ever greater chastity and purity, and if your spirit approves that advance (so that the "love affairs" of a Christ are inconceivable to you) the time has come when you can profitably use your perceptions that the conventions of society are stumbling-blocks, legal penalties an iniquity, and that even monogamy is far from affording a final solution of the problem. There is, then, no danger that those whom you influence will, by your misdirection, be led backwards to any of the customs from which the mass of humanity have partially escaped, after the experience, the relapses, and the painful efforts of many thousand years.

If you aim at freedom as an end in itself, careless as to how freedom should be used when it is gained, then the more strenuous your efforts are, the more surely will they evoke a reaction in those who feel that life has an aim, and that in the conduct of our lives we all need guidance, and are all (whether we know it or not) influencing and guiding others. If you desire freedom, remember that it is *truth* which alone can really set us free.

Even to our present perceptions, the "struggle for existence," in war and commerce, is no in-

scrutable evil, neither is sexual desire, — great as are the evils that have resulted from each of these things.

Through war and patriotism, men, from mere isolated individuals, or families, have been welded into groups capable of some heroism and some self-sacrifice for a common cause. Through business competition men have obtained some mastery over the laziness and self-indulgence of their natures. Through this training (and thanks to the misery it has involved) man is being driven forward (often by "a recoil from his own vices") to seek for wider union, and for a fairer field in which to use his powers in the service of others. And men have at last come to a point from which they can begin to discard as hindrances the means by which they have advanced so far.

So it seems to be with the sex-passion. Who that has watched it awaken in a selfish breast an interest in at least one other existence besides his, or her own; and has seen how, through that one other, it has opened their hearts to sympathy with a whole class (or sometimes to a perception of the iniquity of a social system) can fail to see that this force also serves as a means to a good end? But again, watching it carefully, and seeing how this passion excites, torments, and pre-occupies men and women; narrowing their interest to what concerns one other or a few others — how can we but desire escape from it for ourselves, and for all to whom we wish well?

We should try neither to underrate nor to

exaggerate the service these things have rendered, and are rendering, to the development of man's nature. Patriotism is better than selfish isolation, but worse than a recognition of the brotherhood of man. Industrious effort to secure one's own living is an advance on laziness, but is worse than zeal in the service of all. Sexual attraction and the family bond, while they may draw men from isolation and egotism, may also hamper man when more developed, and confine his interests and activity to a narrower circle and to a lower plane than they would reach were he free.

From this point of view, war, commerce, and sexual-attraction — useful instruments in the progress of the race—tried by the standard of the ideal, fall short and stand condemned as things we have to outgrow and leave behind on our upward path towards a fuller spiritual life.

It may be said that what I have briefly indicated as my perception of the inevitable and desirable line of human progress, is not the right line at all. That the application of Christ's law of love in economics does not make towards the brotherhood of man, or that, in sex matters, it does not make towards chastity and purity. Some may hold that Christ's law itself is erroneous; others that Christ was wrong in attempting to apply it practically to the different phases of human life; that he should not have expressed any definite opinions on such difficult questions as those of property, law, government, or sex; that, in fact, the application of the "law of love"—to such a

problem, say, as landowning—should not be considered in advance, but should be left, by each individual, until the stress of events force him to take some immediate personal action.

But my argument is that those who believe in progress at all should understand that progress must have a direction — the stream must flow somewhere. What we need is to discern which way it is flowing, and to know whether we approve or disapprove of that direction. This can only be done by unbiassed free-thinking.

My views may be all wrong, but then—those who care about the matter should show me where the error lies, and co-operate with me in seeking to discern the *true* line of human advance. If Christ's law of love be wrong, — what is right? If it be right, let us study its practical application both in economics and in sex matters.

Some, again, may say that the true line, on one or both these sides of life, is undiscoverable; we must wait and drift a bit. That, for the present at least, the problems of morality are inscrutable. We may knock but it will not be opened unto us, we may search but shall not find. We are on the river of life but must not know whether to row upstream or drift with the current.

But surely this attitude is a foolish one; the plain man, facing the facts of life honestly, feels and knows it to be false. Life is indivisible, and life is always in the present. There can be no solution of the economic problem without a solution of the sex-problem. The two are in-

separably linked together in the life of man. And how can a man help to guide his fellows unless he know in which direction to point them on both these issues?

All who wish to leave the world better than they found it, all who think they have perceived some truth, and hope to do some service, cannot escape from the responsibility of serving in the same army with the saints, the prophets, and the martyrs — *i.e.* with those to whom truth was precious, and duty imperative; who saw clearly that there is a morality embracing all our actions, discernible to man in the present — now and for ever.

Like them we must perceive that truth and right exist,—and our earnest effort must be that "righteousness shall flow down like a river and truth like a mighty stream."

The foregoing article appeared in the *New Order* of September 1898.

The plain, unperverted man needs no argument to show him that his spirit strives towards goodness. But in the conflict between Church Christians asserting what is unverifiable, and scientists shutting from their minds the plainest facts of their inner consciousness, so many cultured people become perplexed, that I have thought it worth preserving this product of my own wanderings in the wilderness, in the hope that it may be of use to some of them.

WAR AND PATRIOTISM

MANY who express disapproval of war in general have considered it right to abstain from attempting to do anything to check the war in South Africa, or to discourage the patriotic spirit it has engendered at home. This has occurred even among Socialists, Secularists, Peace Societies, Christian Churches, Scientists, Non-Resistants, and members of "The Society of Friends."

It is always more difficult to meet confused thought than to reply to a positive mistake. And when many people share in one confusion, yet each states his case somewhat differently, an elucidation becomes almost impossible.

It therefore seemed to me difficult to apply non-resistant principles to this war in a way that would be intelligible to more than a small section of those I wished to reach.

While I pondered these things in my mind, John Bellows of Gloucester, a member of the Society of Friends, was moved to break from the general trend of Quaker thought and feeling, and to come forward as spokesman for those who, while theoretically disapproving of war, and refusing to share in it themselves, desire to support a war Government. He issued a pamphlet

in which he condemns *all* war, but seeks to defend and justify our Government for its part in the Transvaal War.

Those whom he represents in this matter could hardly have found anyone whose character and ability gave him a better right to be heard in their defence; and it seemed to me that by replying to this pamphlet I could focus the main arguments better than if I shot them into the air.

Part of John Bellows' purpose in writing was to instruct those foreigners who through ignorance believed us to have acted badly towards the Republics; and, utilising this circumstance, I tried, by pointing out what a well-informed foreigner might fairly charge us with, to put the matter as impartially and impersonally as in me lay. In the second half of my reply I was helped by the theoretical admissions John Bellows made that, in principle, war (when there are no wicked Boers to be chastised) was not a desirable way of spending the powers of mind and body intrusted to us.

The purpose of my article is to expose the fallacies by means of which this war and all wars are excused and perpetuated.

A Letter to John Bellows on the War

Dear John Bellows,—I have read the copy you kindly sent me of your pamphlet, "The Truth

about the Transvaal War and the Truth about War," written to supply a brief and simple answer to the condemnation of our Government expressed by foreign critics, and at the same time to explain your own belief that all war is wrong.

The high esteem I feel for your character and your many useful activities, the importance of the subjects you touch upon, and the detestation I feel for the wholesale, premeditated and systematic slaughter of my fellow-men (especially when continued after one party to the conflict has asked for peace) move me to reply.

I, too, have talked with foreigners, and if we consider what their indictment against our Government is, and what reply you are able to make to it, it should help to clear the issue as looked at from a point of morality no higher than that usually accepted among educated men to-day.

But I agree with you that we must not rest finally content with the code already generally accepted; and in the latter part of this reply I shall be most happy to follow you in considering what our conduct *ought to be*, judged by the highest standard our reason and our conscience supply.

What then are the main charges brought against us by well-informed foreign critics?

Their first and main contention is, that in 1884 the Pretoria Convention of 1881 was replaced by the London Convention. This made the Transvaal independent; deprived Britain of all right to

interfere in its *internal* affairs; and—except that the British Government retained a right to veto their foreign treaties—made the Transvaal a sovereign independent State. The first thing an apologist for the British Government must do is to meet this statement, on which the rest of the quarrel depends.

Among other proofs our critics adduce the facts that:

1. The Transvaal Government expressed the above view in their despatch of April 16, 1898, and maintained it throughout the late negotiations.

2. That it is the unanimous opinion of all the lawyers in Europe and South Africa to whom the case has been submitted that (except in the one particular mentioned) no "suzerainty" has in fact existed since 1884.*

* In relation to the South African Republic the term *Suzerainty* has been used in two different ways.

In the Convention of 1881 it was used to define England's position in connection with the rights of interference she retained under that treaty. There was to be a British resident who would "report to the High Commissioner as representative of the Suzerain." In case of apprehension of war in South Africa, English troops might move through the Transvaal, and there were a number of enactments relating to the natives and to other questions, which gave the English Government ample scope to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal should they wish to do so. The desire of the Boers to manage their own internal affairs was expressed in their dislike of the word "suzerainty."

In the Convention of 1884 we abandoned the use of the word, and the Boer delegates who signed that Convention stated the matter to their Volksraad thus:—"It" (the 1884 Convention) "makes . . . an end of the British Suzerainty and . . . also restores her full self-government to the South African Republic, excepting a single

3. That even British politicians, including members of the present British Government, have admitted that after 1884 they possessed no

limitation regarding the conclusion of treaties with foreign powers. With the suzerainty, the various provisions and limitations of the Pretoria Convention . . . have also, of course, lapsed."

This statement was transmitted to the English Government, was reprinted in our Blue Books, and no objection was raised to it.

It is true that, in a restricted sense of the word, "suzerainty" still existed, owing to the fact that foreign treaties concluded by the Transvaal had to be submitted to England. There is, philologically, no objection to such a use of the word; but the word was dropped at the request of the Boers, who made "considerable territorial and other sacrifices" to be rid of it and of the restrictions which, to them, it represented. And to use it now, without in some way differentiating between the suzerainty of 1881 and that of 1884, is to court confusion.

The simplest way is to follow the Conventions, and to speak of the suzerainty as implying rights of interference similar to those existing in 1881, but abolished in 1884. Another way would be to take a hint from Algebra and speak of suzerainty^2 (internal and foreign interference suzerainty) and suzerainty^1 (foreign treaty suzerainty).

John Bellows, in a reply to my article, further refers to a "false claim made by the Transvaal," and quotes Professor Bryce as saying that later on they "tacitly dropped the unsustainable claim to be a sovereign international State, and expressed themselves ready to abide by the Convention of 1884."

This need not detain us long. In reply to Chamberlain's argument that if the "preamble" of the 1881 Convention, containing the assertion of suzerainty, was not carried forward into the 1884 Convention, then the independence of the Transvaal in domestic questions which was contained in the same "preamble" also lapsed, the Transvaal replied that the form of the 1884 Convention implied that the South African Republic was "a sovereign international State." To be quite exact they should, as Mr Reitz afterwards admitted, have added the words, "limited by the restriction contained in Article 4 of the Convention"—the foreign treaty limitation, the existence of which the Transvaal Government never disputed.

Evidence in Lord Derby's own handwriting exists of the abolition of the "preamble" on which Chamberlain based his case.

right to interfere by force in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. For instance:—

Lord Derby, who negotiated the 1884 Convention, reported that the Convention granted "the same complete internal independence in the Transvaal as in the Free State."

W. H. Smith, when Leader of the House of Commons, said: "It is a cardinal principle of that settlement that the internal government and legislation of the South African Republic shall not be interfered with."

Mr Balfour (January 15, 1896) said "The Transvaal is a free and independent Government as regards its internal affairs."

Lord Salisbury (January 31, 1896) said "The Boers have absolute control over their own affairs."

Mr Chamberlain in his despatch of December 31, 1895, defined the Transvaal as "a foreign State which is in friendly treaty relations with Great Britain." On May 8, 1896, speaking in the House of Commons, he said: "To go to war with President Kruger in order to force upon him *reforms in the internal affairs of his State, with which successive Secretaries of State* standing in this place *have repudiated all right of interference,* that would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise."

On August 12, 1896, he said: "Not only this Government but *successive Secretaries of State have pledged themselves repeatedly that they would have nothing to do with its internal affairs.*"

From 1884 till 1897, say our critics, Boers, Britons

of all parties, and foreigners, were agreed that on questions of franchise, taxation, treatment of natives, corruption of officials, etc., Britain had no more right to interfere in the Transvaal than in the United States of North America.

Since 1897, say our critics, the British Government has revived its claim to "suzerainty" and its claim to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. It refused to submit this pretence to arbitration; it repeatedly increased its demands; on September 8, 1899, it refused to give effect to a pacific proposal of its own, presented to the Transvaal Government during the preceding month; and, finally, it informed the Transvaal Government that further demands *not specified* would be formulated, and proceeded to call out the reserves as if for war.

Our critics hold that this course of proceedings justified the Transvaal Government in issuing an ultimatum demanding that all differences should be settled by arbitration, and that Great Britain should meanwhile cease to land troops and should withdraw those that had been pushed forward to the borders of the Transvaal. The rejection of this ultimatum meant war; and again the Boers are held to have been justified in commencing the fight before the English were in a numerical superiority.

That is their case. But to understand the sentiment which puts England's treatment of the two republics on a level with Russia's treatment of Poland or Finland, we must listen to what

our critics have to say of events that preceded the war: events that belong to a region of lies, suspicion, and underhand intrigue in which it is easy to be misled, for not the whole truth about them is yet known.

About 1887 rich gold fields began to be rapidly developed in the Transvaal, and a plan was formed to upset the Government which represented the Dutch agricultural population, and to establish a Government more favourable to the interests of the owners of the gold mines. A Committee of the English Parliament, after inquiry, reported that Cecil Rhodes—while Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, managing director of the Chartered Company, and Privy Councillor (besides being Chairman of De Beer's diamond mines, and a leading capitalist of the Rand gold mines)—was guilty of "subsidising, organising, and stimulating an armed insurrection," and of involving himself in "gross breaches of duty." "He deceived the High Commissioner, . . . concealed his views from his colleagues, and *led his subordinates to believe that his plans were approved by his superiors.*"

But a liar does not always lie, and our foreign critics suggest that perhaps his plans *were* approved by his superiors.

They allege that the *Times* newspaper, which supports the Government's policy in South Africa, was in intimate connection with Cecil Rhodes, as is shown by cablegrams produced in evidence before the South Africa Committee (they were sent in a "code," and that is why they read awk-

wardly in translation. The punctuation is partly conjectural):

From Miss Flora Shaw (who has an important position on the Times*) to Cecil Rhodes, 10th December* 1895.

"Can you advise when you will commence the plans, we wish to send at earliest opportunity sealed instructions representatives of the London *Times* European capitals; it is most important using their influence in your favour."

From Dr Rutherfoord Harris to Cecil Rhodes, November 4th, 1895.

". . . You have not chosen best man to arrange with J. Chamberlain. I have already sent Flora to convince Chamberlain; support *Times* newspaper and, if you can, telegraph course you wish *Times* to adopt now with regard to Transvaal; Flora will act."

From Dr Harris to Cecil Rhodes, November 5th, 1895, *concerning certain permanent officials of the Colonial Office.*

"These and Flora we have these solid."

From Miss Flora Shaw to Cecil Rhodes, December 17, 1895.

"Chamberlain sound in case of interference European Powers; but have special reason to believe wishes you must do it immediately."

From Cecil Rhodes to Miss Flora Shaw, December 30, 1895.

"Inform Chamberlain that I shall get through all right if he supports me, but he must not send cable like he sent to High Commissioner in South Africa. To-day the crux is, I will win, and South Africa will belong to England." (*Signature of sender, F. R. Harris for C. J. Rhodes, Premier.*)

Our critics point out how promptly, when Jameson started on his buccaneering expedition, the *Times* published the famous, and infamous, appeal to protect the women and children in Johannesburg from Boer violence; which was a pre-arranged attempt to excuse murder by mendacity, and had been drawn up weeks in advance, with Mr Rhodes' approval.

The *Times* followed this up with a poem by the Poet-Laureate in praise of Jameson's achievement.

When the matter was investigated, the Colonial Office did not produce the documents which might have served to disarm suspicion; and no sooner was the investigation ended than Mr Chamberlain said in Parliament that "there existed nothing which affected Mr Rhodes' personal character as a man of honour." Some of our foreign critics, however, differ from Mr Chamberlain, and consider systematic lying and deception to be dishonourable.

Mr Rhodes is still a Privy Councillor; the English officers who took part in the Raid have been re-appointed to their positions in the army.

No compensation has been paid either to the families of those who were killed by Jameson's men or to the Transvaal.

This attempt to obtain control of the gold fields by violence having failed, Mr Rhodes said he would adopt "constitutional means" to obtain reform.

In conjunction with other capitalists (who, our critics admit, were by no means all Englishmen) he obtained control, by purchase, of most of the newspapers published in South Africa. Men on the staffs of these papers acted as correspondents for the leading English newspapers and, by a vast machinery of mendacity, the newspaper readers of England were systematically deceived.

Outrages and grievances were manufactured faster than the lies could be exposed; whatever was really bad in the Transvaal was made the most of, till in a few months the majority of readers in England and British South Africa came to believe that the Boers (who had figured in history as being no worse than most of their neighbours) were a race so exceptionally cowardly, ignoble, corrupt, oppressive, and ambitious, that the sooner Englishmen of honour (such as Mr Rhodes or Mr Chamberlain) ruled over them the better it would be.

The re-assertion of England's "suzerainty" ("a breach of national faith" according to Sir Edward Clarke) fitted in with Mr Rhodes' plans, and at last the capture of Pretoria, which Jameson failed to effect in 1895, was accomplished by Lord Roberts

in 1900, and welcomed all over England with great rejoicings. But the moral aspect of the case is as bad as before, and our critics recall a remark of Gladstone's that a course which is morally wrong cannot be politically right.

Briefly, then, the charges may be summed up thus:

1. That the English Government made an unfounded claim to "suzerainty," and interfered unfairly in the internal affairs of the Transvaal.

2. That it used this unjust claim to "suzerainty" as a pretext to avoid arbitration, repeatedly and urgently pleaded for by the Boers, and evaded (and on the vital issue of "suzerainty" absolutely refused) by the British; who, on the main points, were resolved to be sole judges in their own cause.

3. That when presumptive proof was found, apparently connecting the Colonial Office with the plans formed by Jameson and Rhodes, which culminated in the Raid, the Parliamentary Committee (which contained Liberal as well as Conservative members) avoided and evaded their duty of probing the matter to the bottom; and that the bulk of the English press and public appeared well satisfied that this should be so.

. . . . . .

I took up your pamphlet expecting that, if nothing more is possible, you would at least succeed in showing cause for mitigation of the sentence to be pronounced on us by posterity. But I only found a fresh instance of the fact that the war-fever deprives men of all sense of

proportion, makes them credulous of blame attaching to others, and so unwilling to consider the evidence against themselves that they fail even to understand the charges they should meet.

You, for instance, devote a quarter of your space to a historical sketch of the Boers, differing gravely from the statements of Professor A. Kuyper and other writers on the same subject; but you do not explain in what way your statements, if true, justify our Government. Are we killing Boers to revenge cruelties practised by their fathers and grandfathers? Did we go to war to protect the natives? Or are no wrongs being perpetrated in Kimberley and in London (where 800,000 people are living in illegally overcrowded dwellings) which should be rectified before we violently attempt to remove the mote from our brother's eye.

Like other apologists, you tell us the Boers are worse than the English, and that "average Boer opinion and the Boer Executive" are worse than "British law and public opinion." But I fear the testimonials we give ourselves do not convince our foreign critics. All nations are willing to certify to their own moral superiority, and we are accused of having not too little, but too much, of the spirit of the Pharisee who thanked God he was not as other men are.

Next you proceed—and your pamphlet is quite a fair specimen of much other patriotic literature on the subject—to treat of the Africander Bond and the "scheme for driving the English out of

South Africa." You are vexed with "party writers" for saying there is no evidence of such a design, and you offer the evidence of Presidents Reitz, Steyn, Kruger, and others, "all distinctly admitting it." "Here, then, is the evidence of every President of the Transvaal and of the Free State for the last quarter century, showing the determination of the Bond to drive the British by the sword out of South Africa."

We have heard so much of the great Boer conspiracy, which foreign critics say that we invented, that one is glad to meet a writer like yourself not afraid to produce the evidence which leads him to believe in the conspiracy.

Leaving the dead to answer for themselves, let us see the evidence against the living—"the evidence of every President," "all distinctly admitting it."

"Of President Reitz (since Secretary of State in the Transvaal) *a Dutch Burgher*, T. Schreiner, *writes in the 'Weekly Times,' December* 1, 1899: 'I met Mr Reitz . . . *between seventeen and eighteen years ago* . . . whereupon the following colloquy in substance took place between us.'"

But is this the kind of evidence that can justify a war? Would we, among our own people, condemn a single man to any punishment on such hearsay evidence of things said long ago?

After this, one is hardly surprised to find that President Steyn's distinct admission amounts to the fact that the *Daily News* reports: "Of President Steyn, an *Attorney-General* [unnamed] of the Free

State *made the following statement to the Rev. W. Tees*, Presbyterian Minister in Durban!"

If we are going to support wars justified by evidence like *that*, before long, I fear,

"There 'll be one shindy, from here to Indy."

President Kruger's distinct admission turns out to be a report in the *Times* (24th May 1900) of "two secret conferences" held in 1887 "between Kruger and the Orange Free State."

People will ask whether Kruger admits the correctness of the conversations he is reported to have had thirteen years ago in secret with "The Orange Free State" (*sic!*), especially as many regard the *Times* as being more patriotic than veracious.

The reason people doubt whether the conspiracy ever existed, except as an excuse for the seizure of the Transvaal, is not merely the absence of any serious evidence of its existence, but also the fact that the number of people of Dutch descent in South Africa is estimated to be less than 450,000, of whom more than half are resident in British Colonies. Half of the Dutch population in South Africa took no part in the present war, even though they regard it as one of unjust aggression on our part. The populations we have fought against numbered, it seems, about 200,000 souls (less than half the population of Birmingham), and the Empire they are supposed to have conspired against has about 50,000,000 white subjects, and has sent to South Africa more than one

soldier for each man, woman, child, and baby of its opponents! Under these circumstances it is difficult to believe in the conspiracy, especially when one reads the ridiculous "evidence" produced to prove its existence. The vagueness of the charge is shown once more in your own pamphlet by the way in which you jumble the Africander Bond in Cape Colony (a political organisation which supported Mr Rhodes when he was Prime Minister) with the interests of the burghers of the Dutch Republics, who sometimes were, and sometimes were not, on good terms with the Africander Bond of Cape Colony.

The stubborn resistance of the Boers when fighting for their homes and their independence, in or near their own country, is no indication that they would ever have consented to risk their lives for a wild dream utterly unlike any project recorded in the past history of their race.*

If the British Empire is to be frightened into oppressing her smaller neighbours by such cowardly fears of such intangible conspiracies, the verdict of impartial observers will be that the sooner our Empire crumbles into dust like Babylon or Rome the better for humanity, freedom, and justice.

The fact that the Boers armed themselves, seems to you, and to others, a proof of evil intentions. And I do not deny that when men arm themselves, and drill, they also mean, under certain

* The history of New York State shows how well Dutch and British can co-operate on terms of equality.

circumstances, to kill. But what of the fact that *we* spent on armaments a hundred times as much as they did, and did what the Boers did not—viz. kept many thousands of men doing nothing else but learning to kill in the most approved way—devoting their whole energy to it?

The truth is, that until the quarrel between the Cape Colony and the Transvaal about the "Drifts," and until the Transvaal Government began to be alarmed at the preparations that preceded the Jameson Raid in which they were attacked by patriotic Englishmen, their military expenditure and equipment is known to have been small.

For admittedly military purposes the expenditure of the Transvaal was:

1894, before the Raid	£28,158
1895, the year of the Raid, . .	87,708
1896, the year after the Raid . .	495,618

If we add all expenses (Public Works, Special Expenditure, and Sundry Services) *part* of which *may* have had a military aim, we get:

1894	£528,526
1895, the Raid year	1,485,244
1896	2,007,372

that being the maximum reached before the present war.

Our own war expenditure has risen since 1894 from about £33,000,000 to over £44,000,000 (not including the cost of the present war), and will continue to increase so long as we think it right

for us to do what it is wicked of other people to do.

Another accusation is that the Boers drew their revenue from the gold mines instead of taxing the farming population. But why should not gold mines, forming the chief wealth of the country, pay the whole or nearly the whole of the taxes?

Granting that their method of collecting the taxes was bad, should we (who, for the sake of revenue, force an opium trade on China) quarrel with them on that account? And if with them, why not with the United States, and Russia, and all countries in which British residents pay taxes of which we disapprove?

Scant allowance is made for the fact that the development of the gold-fields placed the Transvaal Government in a position of great difficulty and temptation, and entirely altered the conditions existing when the conventions were negotiated. Had the Boers treated their promises as lightly as we treated ours to evacuate Egypt, it would even then have been no more binding upon our Government to take action, than it is binding on France to quarrel with us.

The eagerness with which even professed friends of peace, like yourself, snatch at any and every excuse for strife, and write as though these excuses necessitate and justify the continuance of a war (in which some 10,000 of our own men have already perished) until we utterly destroy two free nations, is one of the saddest features of this bad business.

To allow miners, most of whom came to the country to get money and did not intend to settle permanently, to vote in the election of the highest rulers in the State, including the President, would have been a questionable course, and it is not certain that under English rule they will soon obtain the rights we wished to extort for them from the Boers. Englishmen have not hitherto shown themselves eager either to enfranchise the people of India (millions of whom are at least as moral and enlightened as the average Uitlander), or to obtain real freedom of public meeting in this island for those who disapprove of popular wars.

But the main points to which foreign readers of your pamphlet will be apt to look are those concerning the claim to "Suzerainty" and the refusal of Arbitration.

We are accused not merely of having refused arbitration on the vital question of the interpretation of the Convention, but of having manufactured a fraudulent claim to "suzerainty" in order to avoid arbitration.

Among the evidence adduced is this passage from Mr Chamberlain's despatch (Bluebook C. 8721, No. 7, October 1897): "*Finally, the Government of the South African Republic proposes that all points in dispute between Her Majesty's Government and themselves relating to the Convention should be referred to arbitration, the arbitrator to be nominated by the President of the Swiss Republic.*" And the reply to this proposal, given in the despatch above quoted, was that "*Her Majesty holds toward*

the South African Republic the relation of a suzerain . . . and it would be incompatible with that position to submit to arbitration the construction of the conditions on which she accorded self-government to the Republic."

This is the crucial matter. Why did our Government object to allowing the interpretation of the 1884 Convention to be settled by arbitration? Why did it try to resuscitate the "suzerainty" of 1881? Why, that is, did it prefer the path towards war to the path towards peace?

It is precisely at this point that all the apologists for our Government seem to break down most utterly; nothing could be more pitiable than your own collapse.

You take the impossible line of evading the issue. You treat Reitz's communication of 9th June 1899 (when the Transvaal Government had abandoned hope of inducing our Government to consent to arbitration on the *fundamental* questions), as though the limitations insisted on by our Government, and there acquiesced in, were limitations cunningly slipped in by the wicked Boers!

When men argue in that spirit, war is a natural outcome. Explanations are of no use:

> "Folks never understand the folks they hate;
> But fin' some other grievance jest as good,
> 'Fore the month's out, to get misunderstood."

Finally, you pretend (and it shows how desperate your case is) that the English proposal to appoint commissioners to inquire into the working of the

seven year franchise law "was *arbitration*, and Kruger recognised it as such and refused it" (which happens to be untrue), and you proceed to recount Kruger's objections to our interference in the internal affairs of the Transvaal on this particular point; and, after distorting them grotesquely, you finish up by asking: "If this is not shuffling and deceit carried to its farthest limits, what is?"

I fear people reading your pamphlet, who do not know how much better are your actions than your arguments, will be likely to quote those words with an application you hardly contemplated when you penned them.

"We are bound to judge justly of those who do not hold the same views" as we do, say you; and thereupon comes a denunciation of Kruger's "cant" ("If his offence be rank, should yours be rancour?"); of the cruelty of the Boers; of the "poor silly Free-Staters"; of the Gladstone Government, with "its lack of manliness and honour"; a condemnation of "those in England who advocate peace . . . from enmity" to their own Government; and a laudation of our noble selves, "because *England* has governed justly, and *her* Crown has *everywhere* reflected the sunlight of freedom." In the despatches of *our* Colonial Office you "cannot find a single sentence that is not courteous and forbearing and straightforward as ever was penned," and in proof thereof you quote the despatch which precipitated the war by its reference to our rights of interference

"which are derived from the Conventions" (in the plural).

You give us the Uitlander "stung to madness" by taxes on dynamite and on imported bacon (and the fact that most of them objected to the war and some of them fought for the Boers, shows to what a pitch of madness they had been driven); but we never come to the real question of *our right to interfere*, except in your bald assertion that "England was bound to insist on the fair observance of the '81 and '84 Conventions," and "*justly* refused to re-establish the independence of the Boers." But this is merely a second-hand version of Chamberlain's trick of coupling the two Conventions together as though they were both valid.

So one reluctantly comes to the conclusion that you really have no case, but come into court with so bad a cause that the best you can do is to "abuse the plaintiff's attorney."

So far, I have tried to regard the matter from the point of view of an impartial outsider holding only such moral views as are already, to-day, generally professed among educated men. Let me now speak for myself on the matter and explain wherein I agree and wherein I disagree with the general principles expressed by you in the last pages of your pamphlet.

And first for the points of agreement. You rightly say:

"The force which is already operating to diminish the frequency and the horrors of war

is the same that will finally lead to its extinction. This force is *sympathy;* beginning in the individual, and gradually spreading its influence, . . . and for some share . . . in this evolution, every human being is responsible."

"Every human being is called to that spirit of peace in his own soul (for the Kingdom of God is within) which spreads the influence of peace on those around him."

"All war is wrong. It is wrong because it deadens the sympathy placed in every human heart. . . . Wrong because it sins against the law, inwrought into our very being, that we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us."

"Even in an absolutely just cause . . . it cannot be carried on without itself creating new and immeasurable wrongs."

"It is of no moment that all men should hold the opinion that war is unlawful, *while they remain in the spirit of which war is one of the natural outcomes.*" "To insist on the letter of Christ's commands, instead of thus coming to the real meaning of them, is to destroy even the letter itself."

I am in agreement with you that it is useless to try "to distinguish between force used in civil government, such as that of the police, and the power of the sword; for the power of the policeman rests on that of the soldier, who is called out in the last resort to support it, as in cases of riot, etc." The difference is one of degree and not of kind.

Again I fear you are right in saying: "The Peace Society . . . takes no account of changing the tree, but aims at preventing some of its fruit from ripening." And I am glad to hear you say of the Society of Friends that:

"Its members keep as one man faithful to the practice of refusing to bear arms; and if it came to the test I believe numbers of them would suffer death rather than inflict death."

Agreeing on these important matters, how is it that I feel shocked and dismayed by your pamphlet as a whole?

Let us put the case this way. Two men, John and Paul, have long been quarrelling about certain rights of way that John claims over Paul's ground. Chiefly they are concerned about some yellow sand on Paul's land that John wishes to dig without paying toll to get at it. The quarrel is one of long standing, and the case is too intricate for a plain man easily to understand. Each says the other is a liar—and Paul says it is a case of "Naboth's vineyard." Paul offers to let an umpire settle the quarrel; but John says that he cannot agree to that, because he has rights over Paul's ground that Paul has not got over his. Besides, he says that Paul's offer to settle peacefully is all lies and cant; what Paul really wants is to turn him (John) out of some of his own fields. As John is much bigger than Paul, the neighbours laugh at this; but John says that is only because they are jealous of him for being so much better and richer than they are.

Well, one fine day the quarrel gets hotter than usual and John and Paul begin to fight. Paul struck the first blow, and excused himself by saying that John was cutting a big stick to kill him with, and that he had to strike in self-defence.

So they fought and fought till it became evident that John was really killing Paul. Paul cried out for mercy and said he would agree to anything John liked, only not to giving up his land altogether.

Sam (a neighbour who lived across the stream) offered to settle the quarrel, but John said No, it was his patriotic and loyal duty to kill Paul now that he had once started to do it. He did not want the sand-pit, but Paul was such a liar that there was nothing for it but just to take the pit and the field too, so that things should be comfortable all round, and that people should know what sort of a man he was, and feel a proper respect for him in future.

Now one of John's sons, who was called Conciliation, said that it would be better not to kill Paul if he would agree to give all that, before the fight, John had asked for. But another son, called Patriot, hit Conciliation on the mouth and would not let him speak; and called Paul so many names, and accused him of so many crimes, and was so angry with Paul for having struck the first blow, that the matter went on to extremities.

But now a strange thing happened: A Friend

came upon the scene who thought it quite wrong of people to fight and kill each other. *All* strife was wrong, said he—we should do to others as we would be done by, and we should forgive our enemies always. But when Conciliation said: "Father's very angry and will surely kill Paul, and it will be a great disgrace to our family for many years to come," the Friend got quite excited. "Nonsense," said he, "*all* strife is wrong—only *this* strife is right. Don't you see that John *thinks* he ought to kill Paul, and as he *thinks* so, it's right for him to do it." And the Friend set to work and wrote a pamphlet to prove that as Paul struck the first blow Paul was in the wrong; and as John said he thought he ought to kill Paul, he did right to kill him! And the Friend implied that those who tried to persuade John that it was better not to kill, were very bad or stupid people, who, if only they had read all the lawyers' papers about the quarrel for the last twenty years would agree that killing is no murder. He added that it was hatred that made some people try to make peace; just as it was pure love of truth and goodness that made him try to justify fighting.

There is, however, one fault in this, and in all such parables, which should be noticed: they present nations as though they were solid blocks of homogeneous humanity, as though Judas and Jesus, being of one nationality, must have been of one character. In real life it is of course not so, as you show by remarking that many of "the

Boers have had no more voice in passing many of the Transvaal laws than if they lived at the North Pole. There are numbers of good people among them, but they have not led." (The same is true in other countries, and perhaps in our own.) Joubert, representing the Boer reform party, was only some 500 votes behind Kruger at the last election. This being so, is it not terrible to think that (even if killing men could be a useful occupation) we are, month after month, killing the wrong men?

Kruger, Leyds, and the rest of the folk our patriots delight in reviling, are not being killed any more than Mr Joseph Chamberlain, or his brother who gets the cordite contracts. The men we are paying to have killed, and to whose wish to make peace we pay no attention, include many of those "good people" who had no voice in the Government.

This is terrible. The shame of this crime has indelibly stamped itself upon the memories and the souls of men. As the massacre of St Bartholomew tainted the cause of Catholicism in France, so the long-drawn-out-butchery of a numerically contemptible race of farmers who do not wish to be ruled by us, is tainting the cause of British Imperialism.

In the sixteenth century men were more openly treacherous, but in our age of Bible Societies, Peace Societies, and Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel, our patriots inflict violence on those who wish to stop the war, and continue to write

long letters exaggerating the wickedness of the Boers, while we continue from month to month our massacre of brave men fighting for freedom.

I consider your pamphlet useful, for it contains certain confusions of thought in current use among us to-day, which go far beyond the question of this war, and help to perplex men's minds, and to hamper progress in many directions. These sophistries need to be exposed; but as those who use them are often insincere men, using them with intentional vagueness, it is difficult to bring them to book. You, however (and this, I think, is a real service), use these sophistries honestly and plainly, so that one is enabled to take hold of them, and examine them, and to detect the fallacies they contain.

You try to justify conduct (the systematic and long protracted slaughter of men who are pleading for peace) which you know to be wrong, by the curious, yet common, plea that those who are responsible for the wrong conduct, think it right. As though no moral responsibility attached to *thinking* rightly! Why, our actions are continually swayed by our thoughts, and by feelings which grow up in connection with our thoughts, and Pascal most rightly said, "Let us then labour to *think rightly*: that is the principle of morality." Were men responsible merely for doing what they see to be right — and not responsible for making good use of their reason and conscience in discovering what is right — those who most

neglected to use their highest faculties would be those least open to reproach.

On the grounds on which you try to justify our Government for this war—viz. that they consider it right—we may with equal ease justify those who practised cannibalism, sodomy, slavery, and every evil that ever has been defended by those guilty of it. Am I to be bound to support *every* Government that says it approves of its own actions? Or does the rule that wrong thoughts justify evil actions apply only when the party concerned is our own?

You speak as if mankind were divided into two sections: (1) those who disapprove of war, and (2) those who approve of it. Yet you have yourself admitted that "all men regard war as an evil," and it is clearly a question of degree. There is not a man who might not yield to the temptation to use some violence to his fellow-men under some extreme provocation; on the other hand, probably there is no member of our present Government, or of any modern Government, who has not at times had some glimmer of the truth that love is better than hatred, and that the greatest benefactors of humanity have relied not on physical but on moral forces.

But supposing it were not so. Supposing every member of the present Cabinet were proved to have wiped absolutely out of his mind every vestige of Christian or of humane feeling. Suppose the slaughter of thousands of our own people, the destruction of the homes of Boer

peasants, the legacy of hatred and bitterness that is being stored up for future generations, counts with them absolutely as nothing—even then what motive can you or I have for condoning their conduct?

If they have any vestige or spark of those principles, or those sentiments, which cause you and me to recognise that gentleness is better than violence, should we not try to rouse and strengthen that side of their nature? But if (which I refuse to believe) they have sunk so low that no plea for humane action, however urgently made, could ever be profitably addressed to them —should we not, at least, cease to support or to defend those who, on matters of such primary importance, are dead to all that we hold sacred, and have signed a bond with death and a covenant with hell?

I was utterly unable to account for your wish to defend this Government and this war till I came to your remarks on Patriotism:

"So far, however, from love of one's own country being a dangerous sentiment, *it is our absolute duty.* There is nothing whatever to hinder our loving some men more than others . . . it is natural and *right* for me to love my own country better than any other, as it is that I should care for my own family before all other families."

"I have certainly felt bitterly . . . every reverse . . . and have felt as lively a relief . . . at the ending, by Cronje's capture, of his power for mischief."

Here I think we come to the root of the matter. If patriotism be a virtue, and if it be not merely natural for me to give an involuntary preference to my own country, but also *right* to give a deliberate preference to it, the matter needs to be very clearly and exactly stated, because the religion we profess fails to enforce this particular virtue.

What were the teachings of Jesus on Patriotism? He taught men to love their neighbours as themselves, and in the example given, the neighbour was not a Jew but a foreigner—a Samaritan.

When the great patriotic dispute as to the rival merits of Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem was put to him, his reply was: "Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall men worship."

When the clash of Jewish and Roman patriotisms was presented to him in the question whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, he neither adopted the patriotic Jewish attitude of rejecting Cæsar's claim, nor did he (as I read it) adopt the patriotic Roman attitude of extolling Cæsar. He said: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" (he could hardly say less after teaching "If any man would take thy coat, let him have thy cloak also")—but allotting to God our hearts and souls and minds and strength, he left little enough for Cæsar, except the stamped coins.

The ideal held up by Jesus distinctly was to love *all* men *as yourself*. Too high an ideal for us to attain unto, no doubt; but too true an ideal for

us to tamper with by talking about the *duty* of caring for the people in our Empire more than for people outside it.

Perhaps you may say the absence of patriotism in Christ's teaching was accidental. He was a Jew at the time when Palestine was held by the Romans. But has it ever struck you that the great religion of the East is as free from patriotism as the teaching of Jesus? Jesus is represented as declining to be made a king; Buddha, to serve and save the world, is represented as leaving his throne and his country.

. . . . . .

The moment one begins to examine the matter carefully, one finds that most people do not know what they mean by "patriotism." A dictionary definition of the word is: "The love and service of one's country." But why *limit* love and service to one's own country? How will such a limit act? Should I love other countries in the same way as my own, only a little less? Or should my feeling towards them be different in kind?

For instance, there has, for years past, been much talk about the desirability of "painting the map of Africa red," and it has culminated in our painting the soil of Africa very red with human blood. Did the patriots who wished to have Africa painted red, wish rather less strongly to have it painted blue, or yellow, or striped? Or was it to be red in *opposition* to the other colours?

Or, again, when you felt the English reverses bitterly, did you feel the Boer reverses only a little

less bitterly? Or did patriotism in your own case imply towards others a desire that God should —

> "Confound their politics,
> Frustrate their knavish tricks"?

Is it not significant, by the way, that in our National Anthem we should keep a bit of blasphemy like that, ready for loyal and patriotic use, even before we know who our next "enemy" is to be? Not being our noble selves they are sure to be a bad lot, and a little defamation in advance perhaps prepares the public mind to take that view of things; but is not the appeal to God somewhat out of place? Is it not characteristically patriotic?

But let us see how the word "patriotism" is used in common speech. Is not a patriotic paper one which can be relied on to side with my country "right or wrong"? Is not a patriotic crowd one which to drunkenness and violence adds a fierce dislike to freedom of speech? Is not a patriotic statesman one who instead of clearing himself from charges gravely affecting his honour, talks grandiloquently of the greatness and power of the Empire? Is not a patriotic Empire one which is a source of danger to the small free States within its reach? Is not a patriotic financier one who regards his country's flag as a "commercial asset"? And is not a patriotic priest one who confuses the issues he proposes to clear, and inflames the angry passions Christ sought to calm?

How did patriotism arise? And why was it honoured in the past?

Long ago men (and animals before men) lived in continual danger of being exterminated. And, when individuals, instead of being purely selfish, advanced to the stage of being ready to sacrifice themselves for the good of the family, clan, race, or nation, to which they belonged, it was a great advance. Horatius, "who kept the bridge of old" to save the city from destruction, the women from outrage, and his comrades from slaughter, deserved to be admired.

Patriotism was brotherhood *limited*. It was natural and inevitable, and a great advance on what went before. The patriot fought for the little group he knew and lived among — and it never occurred to him but that his duty towards foreigners and Gentiles was to hew them in pieces when they threatened his nation.

Loyalty was of similar growth. It was a means of holding men together to resist a common enemy.

Take the case of Russia. It was split up into small States, which the Tartar hordes ravaged with impunity. It was necessary, at whatever loss of freedom, that these small States should all be knit together in implicit obedience to one Tsar if they were to survive. It was better to be loyal and shut one's eyes to his faults, however great they might be, than to expose the nation, men, women, and children, to wholesale destruction.

But the problem of to-day is different. Each

age is tried by its own tests. Empires have expanded, circumstances have altered, and now it is not patriotism and loyalty that save us from destruction. No one wants to massacre the populations of London, Paris, Berlin, or Petersburg. On the contrary, it is patriotism that now causes loss of life. It has lately sent thousands of our countrymen to perish 6000 miles away in South Africa. Patriotism is like a suit of armour which a young man put on when his life was in danger. It saved him from assassination; but, getting accustomed to it, he persisted in wearing it when the danger was past, and, as he grew broader and stouter, the armour became more and more irksome and injurious to him.

Patriotism in our day is already a gigantic superstition, and it is fast becoming an hypocrisy under cover of which unscrupulous men snatch at wealth or power. Previous civilisations have made the same mistake, and have trodden the same path to destruction.

I do not mean to deny that there are honest patriots (I have no doubt you are one) just as there are honest Jesuits. The error is the same in both cases. It is a confusion of the *means* with the *end*. A man begins by hoping that his Church, or his Order, or his Country, will serve the cause of goodness, and he ends by sacrificing the plainest demands of goodness to the supposed advantage of his Church or Country.

It was this spirit which caused the crucifixion of Jesus. "If we let him alone . . . the Romans

will come and take away both our place and our nation" said his enemies (with more plausibility than we have for saying that the Boers would have turned us out of South Africa), so it seemed to them "expedient that one man should die for the people." It was a similar spirit which made Inquisitors, who saw their Church in danger, sentence heretics to be burnt; as though safety for a Church or a nation lay in wrong-doing!

Looking at the matter practically, we may see what a hoax is patriotism and all the talk about trade following the flag, and the common excuses for war on the ground that it will open up a fresh field for Britons. As a plain matter of fact, the lack of a flag and a fatherland does not prevent the international Jew from gaining a livelihood. Mr Beit is said to have made ten times as much money in South Africa as any Briton. And since he seems to have shared with Cecil Rhodes the expense of financing the Johannesburg agitation,* which led up to the Jameson Raid, and the tuning of newspapers, in South Africa and in England, which preceded the present war, it would appear quite possible to exploit a patriotism one does not share.

The more one thinks about this patriotism of great Empires, the more perplexing and intangible the whole thing becomes. With a continually growing Empire, I must refer to an atlas to know who does, and who does not, come within the

* The figures given in the Report of the Select Committee on British South Africa are: Beit, about £200,000; Cecil Rhodes, £61,000.

sphere of my national affection. In science am I to give the preference to theories of British origin? When I hear a tune, must I withhold approval till I am sure it is by a British composer? In commerce one quickly sees how empty is this patriotism which is ready to shed any amount of other people's blood, but will not pay more for British goods than for the same thing from abroad. How many British manufacturers are there who would refuse to put up works abroad to compete with home manufacturers if they saw a good opportunity to do it?

There is no real danger to-day of a foreign foe coming to slaughter women and children, and lay waste a country *not* defended by an army. But our women and children are being slaughtered in a different way.

The land of England is being used not to support the population, but for the profit or pleasure of a small section of its inhabitants.

Half of England is owned by less than 8000 people. Even land which during the Middle Ages was given expressly for the support and education of the poor (for whom the monasteries and priories were supposed to act as trustees) was seized by Henry VIII., and from it great estates were carved for such families as the Cavendishes and the Russells; and the people have been robbed from generation to generation ever since. "Something like a fifth of the actual land in the kingdom was in this way transferred from the holding of the Church to that of nobles and gentry," says

J. R. Green in his *Short History of the English People*. One effect of the fact that most of the people who cultivate the land do not own the land, and receive less than half the value of what they produce, is that our people are more and more crowding together into towns, and are living in a more and more artificial fashion on food brought from the ends of the earth; much as was the case in Rome when its healthy growth was at an end, and it drew its supplies of grain from Egypt and elsewhere.

In consequence of the crowding together of so many people in one place, the owners of the soil in that place obtain a great profit; but at what a cost to the nation! In patriotic London alone 800,000 people are living in illegally over-crowded dwellings!

If England were a patriotic country, and if patriotism, instead of being an excuse for seeking material advantages for our own people at the expense of others, really meant the love and service of our fellow-countrymen, such a state of things would be impossible.

Is it not time that we ceased to prize the armour wherewith the brave and strong defended the weak in days of old, and esteemed, rather, the means whereby we all may now be saved from destruction?

Patriotism distorts our vision; it burdens the people; it causes blood to flow in torrents; it is a perennial spring of hatred, malice, and evil-speaking; and its influence is still so strong

because some people will not think about it, and some, having thought, are still unable or unwilling to speak out. There can be no hope of right action till we have cleared our minds and know at least *which way we ought to face.* We are not called upon to struggle for the Reformation, or to resist the Divine right of kings, or to abolish slavery; but we are called on to realise that to kill men is as bad as to enslave them.

Let the British Empire perish rather than become a hindrance to the spread of brotherhood among all who share our common humanity. Welfare lies in the unification and brotherhood of man, and the superstitions which divide men must be destroyed. Among those superstitions none is worse than patriotism—a fetich to which more lives are sacrificed than ever were offered to Moloch or to Baal. For it our children will be called on to pass through the fire; and for it the peoples are being crushed with an ever-increasing burden of preparations for "national defence"—which lead onward towards international destruction.

You complain that people speak harshly of those who command or commit this wholesale and premeditated murder. I am willing to assert that all who, though endowed with reason and conscience, omit to denounce the abominations of war, share in the guilt of those whom by their silence they encourage. Some words of William Lloyd Garrison's suit the situation: "I am aware that many object to the severity of my language;

but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice. . . . I am in earnest. I will not equivocate; I will not excuse. I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal and to hasten the resurrection of the dead."

There is indeed a remarkably close parallel between the position of the Abolitionists in the United States, who disapproved of slavery during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and the present position in England, to-day, of those who disapprove of war. Just as it was, and is, impossible to prevent men from exploiting one another's labour, so it was, and is, impossible to prevent men from killing one another, and from using violence to one another. Then men openly bought other men to be their chattel-slaves. Now men openly and unblushingly go to war without offering arbitration, and continue it after a defeated foe has asked for peace. Then, as now, a small number of scattered individuals, of little weight with the political parties or the religious sects, began to draw together, to make what stand they could against an evil which, if it could not be cured, might be mitigated. Then, as now, they were opposed, ignored, or at best half-heartedly supported, by the newspapers and the pulpits. To the politicians they were a nuisance, and to the religious bodies a stumbling-block. The Bible ("slaves obey your masters") was quoted against them; patriotism and loyalty to

the Constitution employed to thwart them. Their meetings were broken up, and their speakers suffered from mob violence. They had nothing but the goodness of their cause to rely upon, and their battle, like ours, had to be fought with clearness of thought, fearlessness of utterance, and firm reliance that there is a Power, not ourselves, "which lasting through the ages makes for righteousness."

Not the least remarkable part of the resemblance, is that just as we have among us members of "Peace Societies" and "Friends" opposed to all war in the abstract, who will not say a word against war in the concrete—so they had their philanthropic "Colonisation Society" to transport the negro population of America, and to evangelise and civilise Africa. It formed, in reality, a bulwark of slavery. By absorbing a number of respectable people who without some such safety valve would have felt uncomfortable, it rendered to the cause of slavery the same sort of service that is rendered to the cause of war by such advocates of peace as yourself. Their motto seemed to be:

> "I'm willin' a man should go tollable strong
> Agin wrong in the abstract, fer that kind o' wrong
> Is ollers unpop'lar an' never gets pitied,
> Because it's a crime no one never committed;
> But he mus'n't be hard on partikler sins,
> Coz then he'll be kickin' the people's own shins."

There was nothing in the abominations of slavery that evoked their wrath so much as it was evoked

by the strenuous utterances of Garrison and the Emancipationists, just as there seems to be no horror in this war to move you to the same warmth of condemnation as you can express concerning those who wish to stop this war.

There is yet much in your pamphlet that calls for reply; but I will only make a brief comment on two points.

The first is with reference to your characterisation of the Boer population. It is natural enough that in ordinary speech we should try to characterise a whole nation collectively, and should say that the French are gay, the Dutch phlegmatic, the Germans pedantic, the Turks fatalistic, etc., etc.; but surely every reasonable man should know that there is nothing definite or tangible in such generalisations. To speak of "a strong dislike on account of the antagonism between the two people in respect of their treatment of the blacks," is, surely, only possible to a patriot. Not all Englishmen are kind, and not all Boers are cruel. If strife and slaughter could be justified by loose phrases of this kind, it would not be the slaughter of one race by another, but the slaughter of the cruel people of both races by the kind ones. Then perhaps some people, kinder still, shocked at such barbarity, would step in and slaughter *them* in turn!

Lastly, I would join issue with you as to the necessity for any man to master the intricacies of a diplomatic dispute before he may disapprove of the action of his Government. Children when

scolded for quarrelling and fighting try to shift the question from the broad plain issue on which they are both obviously in the wrong, and to involve it by discussing which began, who took the marble, who first threatened, who first pushed, and who first struck.

But with children and with nations it should never be a question of *comparative*, but always one of *positive* guilt. The older the child and the more Christian and civilised the nation, the greater the shame if it is always drifting into quarrels and strife.

A plain man has a perfect right to say: I refuse to support the Government because they are again fighting—fighting in two or three places at once. They have not made it clear to me and to everybody else, either what they are fighting about, or that they exhausted every possible effort to settle the matter peacefully: by arbitration, or by liberal concessions to the other party. Furthermore, they seem to cherish the childish absurdity that two blacks make one white, and they are as anxious to prove their enemy in the wrong as if that would put them in the right. They have not shown me that they are eager to avoid war, and people who cause men to be killed and women to be left homeless, must not expect that, because I am too busy to read all about their quarrels, I shall, therefore, support them in conduct that my very soul abhors.

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THE DOUKHOBÓRS: A RUSSIAN EXODUS

In a short story by Anatole France, entitled *Le Procurateur de Judée*, Pontius Pilate explains the principles which guided him in public life. He was an Imperialist, and a patriotic politician, intent on maintaining the supremacy of Rome, on extending the blessing of the Roman peace, and on giving the benefit of Roman law and order to subject races whether they wanted it or not. Acts which seem harsh or even wrong, if judged by themselves, were expedient and necessary to further the great purpose which, in his opinion, overrode questions of mere morality, or, rather, set a standard of morality different to that which reason and conscience would demand of a man whose first duty was not to a state, but to a good God.

Pilate is represented as feeling towards the Jews much as some Governor-General or High Commissioner sent out from England might feel towards the Hindoos or the Boers. They were a troublesome lot: too stupid to see the advantages that would accrue from the prevalence of his ideas over theirs. To endanger Rome's supremacy out of regard for the life and liberty of one, or many, of them, seemed to him ridiculous; and it could not enter his head that any religious

or moral movement among a small sect of provincial peasants could be more important than his own decrees, or could have more effect even on the destinies of Rome itself, than the life and doings of Tiberius Cæsar.

The insignificance, in his eyes, of moral movements, and of moral as distinguished from legal and political considerations, is well brought out by the story. Pilate in his old age, many years after his recall from Judea, is talking to a friend who had lived in the East, and who had been an admirer of Mary Magdelene; following her from place to place, and losing sight of her only when she "'joined a small group of men and women who followed a young Galilean wonder-worker. His name was Jesus: he was of Nazareth, and was sent to the cross for some crime or other. Do you, Pontius, remember the man?'

"Pontius Pilate contracted his eyebrows, and raised his hand to his forehead like one who seeks to recall something. Then after some moments of silence:

"'Jesus,' muttered he, 'Jesus of Nazareth? I have no recollection of him.'"

We need not be concerned to defend the probability of Anatole France's story. At any rate it succeeds in causing one to feel how great a difference the observer's point of view makes to his estimate of the importance of current events. Photographers sometimes get their work out of focus, but journalists are in constant danger of doing so. They attach importance to what is

obvious and blatant, while missing the still small voice that will really influence the future.

H. D. Lloyd has said, with as much truth as could well be packed into the space, that, "to tell us of the progressive sway of brotherhood in all human affairs is the sole message of history," —but who, from a perusal of the leading newspapers of any country, would suspect that the progressive sway of brotherhood is more desirable than the dominance of one particular race over all others?

It is a terrible fact that people are brought up under the delusion that the triumph and expansion of *their* nation is identified with the triumph of goodness. National selfishness is not seen to be a dangerous force, but, under the name of patriotism, is openly extolled as a virtue, so that the smouldering ill-will created by national and racial jealousies continually threatens to break into flames.

Ultimately men must either reject the moral principles which underlie both the great religions of the world, Christianity and Buddhism alike, or they must emancipate themselves from a superstition which teaches that we not only do, but ought to, desire the advantage of our own country in its encounters with all its neighbours, and that it is a noble deed to share in obtaining advantages by the slaughter of one's fellow-men. We stand at the parting of two ways, and have to decide whether goodness or patriotism is to be supreme. We cannot serve two masters.

If the majority of men are aware that something is seriously wrong, it is only because the burden of continually increasing armaments, to which no limit can be foreseen, is an object-lesson too palpable to be overlooked. But the evil is primarily a moral evil, and the remedy must be primarily a moral remedy, and this is not yet generally recognised even among the minority who are anxious to devise some mechanism of arbitration or alliance to avert the material ills which weigh upon us and threaten our children. Many who think themselves enlightened are seeking for an external peace to be imposed by force, and are willing to leave the roots of envy, hatred, and malice still unexposed.

Were good-will present, no elaborate machinery would be needed to enable people not to kill each other; but without good-will, the best machinery will not work. Courts of Arbitration may be established and may be useful, but the essential condition of their establishment and utility is that the moral aspect of the question should be clearly perceived and keenly felt by the peoples concerned.

But, while the rulers and the priests and the learned have been delicately touching the fringe of this question, a community of over 7000 Russian peasants (Doukhobórs) have radically solved it for themselves, by deciding that they will not learn to kill their fellow-men. The Russian laws demanded that their young men should enter the army, but it is the business of those who make

bad laws to mend them. A Doukhobór's duty is to obey God rather than man.

To those of us who expect that militarism will ultimately evoke in Europe, and probably in our own country, a struggle more memorable than the emancipation movement of the years 1830 to 1865 in the United States of America, the story of the Doukhobórs presents itself, not as an isolated occurrence, but as a link in a chain which, commencing before Isaiah foretold that swords should be beaten to ploughshares, will only be complete when the collective slaughter of man by man becomes—as isolated murders or acts of cannibalism now are—abhorrent to the reason and the conscience of the generality of sane men and women.

I should like, therefore, briefly to tell the story of the Doukhobórs, but to do so is not easy.

What is true of other men is true of them—they have not always lived up to their beliefs. Like other sects, their views have varied from man to man, and from year to year. They were, for the most part, an illiterate folk, who seldom put their thoughts on paper. They accepted the decisions of recognised leaders, one of whom always came into authority as soon as his predecessor died. Through long years of persecution they learnt to conceal their beliefs. And altogether it is impossible to say with certainty and exactitude what, as a community, they have believed at any given moment, though the main trend of their thought, and the matters of prac-

tice on which they differed from their neighbours, are plainly discernible.

A further difficulty lies in the fact that what has been written about the Doukhobórs has seldom been written impartially. It has often been set down in order to make out a case for or against them. First, we have the statements made to justify or explain their persecutions and banishments. Many officials seem to have considered the Doukhobórs to be obstinate, disloyal, unpatriotic sectarians, stupidly preferring their own opinions to those of the properly constituted authorities in Church and State. *The Century Dictionary*, recently re-issued by the *Times*, contains a reference to these people which must surely be culled from Russian official sources. "The Dukhobortsi," we are told, are those who deny "the divinity of the Holy Ghost." They are "A fanatical Russian sect. . . . Owing to their murders and cruelties they were removed to the Caucasus in 1841 and subsequent years," etc.

What has recently repeatedly occurred among ourselves will serve to explain the nature of many of the accusations brought against the Doukhobórs. When, from interested or other motives, any of the Boers have brought or endorsed accusations against their own people, we have seen with what credulity their statements were immediately received in England. To doubt their word was hardly permitted, and what "they themselves admitted" was considered decisive as against all other Boers. Just so in Russia. The

orthodox priests and loyal officials would make accusations which lacked confirmation. Then, from time to time, some renegade Doukhobórs, perhaps expelled from the sect for bad conduct, or desirous of ingratiating themselves with the "powers that be," would denounce their fellows, attuning their confessions to suit the temper and views of those they were addressing. In this way accusations of crime, blasphemy and conspiracy were produced, which may occasionally have contained some germs of truth, but which, for the most part, were concoctions which served to excuse the persecution of the Doukhobórs by those who had the power to oppress them.

The information supplied by the friends of the Doukhobórs is more reliable, but in Russia not much has been allowed to appear about them, and the best work published in this country, *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, is, to some extent, admittedly an *ex parte* statement. It was a book hastily compiled, inviting subscriptions for the cause; and such works seldom succeed in stating their case with strict impartiality. Moreover, so fluid a creed as that of the Doukhobórs is extremely liable to be unintentionally tinged with the views of those who present it, or who select the specimens by which we are asked to judge it.

In the face of these difficulties I cannot wish the reader to accept my presentation of the matter as containing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. All I can attempt is to give him a statement of the case as I see it.

The name Dou-kho-bór is not difficult to pronounce; the "k" is scarcely heard at all, and the accent is on the last syllable. There are other forms of the name, but this is the simple and short form now usually employed.

The name was used at least as far back as the year 1785. Certain Russian sectarians (everyone who believed anything more reasonable than the doctrines of "the Church" was a heretic or a sectarian) objected to the use of *icons* and were called Iconobórs (image-wrestlers). On the same lines the name Doukhobór (spirit-wrestler) was formed, to describe those whom the Orthodox Russian Church considered to be wrestling against the Holy Spirit. Like many other religious nicknames: Quaker, Shaker, Methodist, etc., the name stuck. It admitted, however, of an interpretation which rendered it innocuous, and the Doukhobórs claim to be those who fight, not with carnal weapons, but armed with the Spirit of Truth. Recently they have begun to call themselves "Universal Brotherhood Christians," but to the rest of the world they have remained "Doukhobórs."

Nothing is definitely known of the sect as a sect before the second half of the eighteenth century, but a very plausible conjecture represents them as being spiritual descendants of the so-called Judaizers, who, rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, and the worship of *icons* and of saints, played a prominent part in Nóvgorod and Moscow about the end of the fifteenth century,

and, yet further back, of the Paulicians, who figure largely in the history of the Eastern Church from the seventh to the eleventh centuries, and of the Bogomílites of the twelfth century.

It has been stated that the sect was founded by a Quaker who visited Russia in the eighteenth century, and, at first sight, this opinion gains some probability from the close resemblance between the opinions held by many of the Doukhobórs and those taught by the early Quakers.

By early Quaker and by Doukhobór alike, Christ was identified with the "inward voice," and with the capacity to see a moral issue clearly and be sure of what is right. Neither primitive Quaker nor Doukhobór rejected the Christ executed in Judea many centuries ago, but to neither of them was his life and death of as much importance as "the Christ within." The early Quakers gave a second place to the Bible; the Doukhobórs, most of whom were quite illiterate, hardly attached importance to it, except, indeed, to those portions which had passed into the Chants or "Psalms" they learnt by heart and used at their meetings.

Had the "inward voice" been an invention of George Fox's, and were it quite exceptional for men to think with their own heads and be guided by their own consciences, the conclusion that the Doukhobórs sprang from a Quaker origin would be almost irresistible.

But the fact is that in all ages and countries there have been men who knew that we can, in

reality, only believe what we see and feel to be true, and that any books or men or churches we may consider to be authorities are (unless geography decides the matter), after all, selected as authorities *by us*.

The fundamental truth that George Fox expressed incisively and powerfully, has been operating since before the days when prophets and priests resisted each other's influence in Jerusalem. Its workings may be traced more frequently and strongly among the heretical, dissenting, and reforming bodies than within the established churches, but nowhere has it ever been quite inoperative. In fact, in trying to trace the spiritual ancestry of the Doukhobórs, one can hardly fail to notice how strong a bond unites the various branches of the anti-Church movement since the earliest Christian times. Orést Novítsky, in his book on the Doukhobórs, published in Kieff in 1832, notes the connection of the Doukhobórs:—

(1) With the *Gnostics*, in their opinion of the Holy Spirit.

(2) With the *Manicheans*, in their belief in an inward light, in their opinion of Jesus Christ, and in their belief in the pre-existence, fall, and future state of man's soul.

(3) With the *Paulicians*, in many matters, and especially in their rejection of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and, in general, of the authority of a visible Church. (The opinions of this sect, which was for centuries large and powerful in the

Eastern Church, may be clearly recognised in the views expressed by many subsequent reform movements in Western Christendom.)

(4) With the *Anabaptists*, in their Theocratic aspirations and their dislike of mundane Governments; also in their repudiation of infant baptism.

(5) With the early *Quakers*, especially in their belief in the Christ within, and their non-resistant principles.

Novítsky further points out that when Peter the Great suppressed the ancient Moscovite Guards, the Streltzí, the latter's spirit of independence and dislike of authority found vent in a religious direction. The Socinian, Anabaptist, and Calvinist opinions, introduced, about that time, by the foreigners in the service of Peter the Great, found their most ready converts and most strenuous adherents among the disbanded Streltzí. Novítsky goes so far as to make the questionable statement that "the Doukhobór doctrine found its first spokesman in the person of a Strelétz,—the well-known Loúpkin," who, with twenty followers, was arrested, tried and imprisoned about the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, for believing that they received direct revelations from the Holy Spirit.

This religious movement (of which the above was but one indication), suppressed in Central Russia, spread to distant provinces. Viewed in the light of the history of the Streltzí, the independent spirit of the Don Cossacks may help to explain the fact that those sturdy warriors,

after their subjugation by Russia, furnished a considerable number of converts to the non-resistant, anti-Governmental faith of the Doukhobórs.

The story that the Doukhobór sect was founded by a Quaker becomes more indefinite the farther we trace it back. Novítsky merely mentions a man, said to be a retired non-commissioned officer, who lived and taught in a village of the Khárkoff Government about the year 1740, and adds: "It was thought that this foreigner was a Quaker, because his manner of life and the rules he preached were quite in accord with the spirit of the Quaker teaching."

The only ascertainable personal connection between the Doukhobórs and the Quakers before the recent persecution, amounts to no more than the fact that English Quakers have more than once, during the last century, visited the Doukhobórs, without quite sharing their views, for among most modern Quakers the Bible, the Atonement, and the "Scheme of Redemption" occupy a prominent place, while the Doukhobórs attach but slight importance to the Bible as a book, and, for the most part, never heard of the "Scheme of Redemption," which they would consider immoral were it narrated to them.

On the other hand, the Quakers have never allowed to any of their members such authority as it has been a conspicuous part of the Doukhobór polity to accord to their leaders. The worst excesses of James Naylor, who, in the early

days of Quakerism, allowed certain followers to accord to him divine honours, are said to have been more than paralleled in the past history of the Doukhobórs. Even in our own day those who have tried to fathom the question of the Doukhobór Leadership have found themselves baffled, or have had to form their own guess.

Why is Peter Verígin (now living in exile at Obdórsk in the extreme North of Siberia) the acknowledged Leader of the Doukhobórs? Was his claim hereditary or not? How was he selected? And what are the limits of his authority? No one who really knows seems inclined to answer these questions explicitly.

That a small sect, frequently persecuted and exposed to many dangers, should need a strong leader vested with extraordinary authority was natural enough. The puzzle is, how they selected a succession of such leaders, and why they made, and still make, no attempt to select a substitute for an absent chief.

. . . . . .

In speaking about the Doukhobórs and in acknowledging the clearness of their perception of certain fundamental moral principles, and the heroic tenacity with which they have acted on them, we must evidently be on our guard against confounding the sect with the truths on which they have built their polity. The sect has erred in the past and split in pieces, in the future it is possible that its members may err yet more grossly and the sect disintegrate yet

more completely, but the validity of certain principles to which they have testified will, I believe, remain as long as the conscience of man continues to influence his actions.

The following remarks, made by F. S. Turner in his valuable historical and critical study of *The Quakers*, seem exceedingly applicable to the Doukhobórs and their leaders:—

"Fox brought religion to bear upon social life with extraordinary persistency and success. But of social reform or political reform, George Fox never so much as dreamt. With him all life was religion, and *only by pure religion did he expect society and government to be regenerated.*" And in that, as it seems to me, his insight was ahead, not only of his own times but of ours also.

Again, Turner says, in words also strikingly applicable to the Doukhobórs and to those nearest them in thought:,

"Amid the strife of controversy, and the bitterness of schisms, we look in vain for the ideal Christian Church. That unhappy delusion of *infallibility* marred the Quaker movement from its outset. George Fox never learned the full truth of toleration. He perceived plainly enough the folly and crime of religious persecution; but he did not see the mistake and the mischief of that mental intolerance which resents difference of opinion as a sin, and cannot recognise an identical spiritual life under a diversity of forms. This blemish dwarfed and deformed his society from its birth, and shrivelled into a sect that

which should have blossomed and expanded into the re-union and revivification of Christendom. Nevertheless, in spite of this sad failure, a loving eye can discern the lineaments of the ideal, gleaming through these unhappy obscurations. The Quaker Church was at first truly Catholic."

. . . . . .

To proceed with their history: Catherine II. followed a policy of religious toleration, wisely declaring that persecution excites animosities. But the Doukhobórs were not the less oppressed, for they were looked upon as enemies, not only of the Church but of the State also, and they were even guilty of attempting to spread their views, which was an enormity not covered by the measure of toleration contemplated by Catherine.

Paul on his accession also contemplated a policy of toleration, but changed his mind, when, in 1799 some Doukhobórs were arrested in Little-Russia openly preaching that rulers were not needed. A highly dangerous doctrine to express in an Empire ruled over by a madman whose own adherents were preparing to assassinate him! Thirty-one Doukhobórs were sent in chains to work in the mines at Ekaterinbúrg, "in order that they might thereby duly feel" as the *ukase* expressed it, "that there are on earth powers ordained by God as a firm defence for good people, and for the terror and punishment of such evil doers."

Alexander I. was more humane than any of

his predecessors. He expressed his belief that the persecution of the preceding thirty years had done no good, and that true Christian principles cannot be disseminated by persecution. He allowed the Doukhobórs to come together from various parts of Russia to form a settlement of their own at the "Milky Waters" near the sea of Azoff. When this permission was given, secret adherents to the sect appeared in all parts of the country.

A curious fact to be noticed, however, is that Alexander I., in spite of his beneficent intentions and humane decrees, was unable to stop the persecution of the Doukhobórs. Again and again during his reign, now here and now there, now on one pretext and now on another, the local authorities worried and tormented them. Year by year those who had delayed their migration to the "Milky Waters" found it more and more difficult to get leave to go there, until, before Alexander's death, further voluntary migrations were quite prohibited.

A turning-point in the history of the Doukhobórs was reached in the early years of the nineteenth century, when, as just mentioned, the members of the sect, scattered over the length and breadth of Russia, were allowed to come together and form one community.

From being a religious sect, held together by unity in opinions and beliefs, anxious to propagate those views among their neighbours, and obliged to adjust their lives and occupations to

a diversity of circumstances and local conditions, the Doukhobórs became an industrial and economic community, no longer persecuted for their theoretical beliefs. When a sect thus becomes a community, the interest shifts to a considerable extent from the question, What did they believe? to the question, How did they live?

They cease to be propagandists, and become engaged in the welfare of their own community and the maintenance of their own religion. Their opinions seem to have been but very little modified during the remainder of the century, so that a statement of what they believed a hundred years ago may pass almost unmodified for a statement of what most of them believe to-day. Then, as now, different individuals and different groups would express themselves variously, yet almost all would show a united front on matters on which they differed from the Orthodox Russian Church.

The difficulty of describing the faith of a sect composed of illiterate peasants, who produced no books, and whose propaganda was carried on by word of mouth, and, for the most part, secretly, would be very great but for the book already alluded to, written by a student (afterwards Professor), Orést Novítsky, who had made a most careful study of the Doukhobórs and their creed. Though he wrote from the point of view of an Orthodox Russian, the author evidently tried to describe the Doukhobór beliefs fairly; and that, in the main, he succeeded in doing so is indi-

cated by the fact that the Doukhobórs themselves eagerly bought the book, and when the first edition was exhausted and difficulties were placed in the way of its being reprinted complete, the price rose to several pounds per copy owing to the anxiety of the Doukhobórs to possess it.

By following Novítsky (and in this account of their faith I have kept almost to his own words) we shall, therefore, have a fair statement of their beliefs, drawn up at a time when they already formed a compact community (of 3985 souls), with an uncertain number of adherents still scattered about Russia, especially in the South, but when the generation was still alive to whom the theoretical opinions of the sect, and even the precise way of stating those opinions, had been matters of the utmost practical importance.

Not to make this account too long, I have, where differences of expression or of opinion are recorded, selected those which appear to represent the main drift of Doukhobór opinion, and to correspond best with the views current among them to-day.

I have followed Novítsky in classifying the tenets of the Doukhobór faith under the following heads, and believe that his account thus reproduced will give the reader as faithful and impartial a sketch of their opinions as the difficulties of the case admit of.

(1) *There is one God.*

They do not deny the Trinity, but the expressions they use about it are mystical, and sometimes

amount to no more than the statement that God may be approached from three sides.

The Tambóff Doukhobórs, when asked whether they acknowledged the Trinity, replied:

> *The Holy Trinity is a being beyond comprehension: the Father is light, the Son life, and the Holy Spirit is peace; it is affirmed in man, the Father by memory, the Son by reason, the Holy Spirit by will: the One God in Trinity.*

This, as Novítsky correctly remarks, rather explains away than affirms the doctrine of the Trinity.

The inclination to put one's own meaning into words to which other people attach importance is active among ourselves, and we need not, therefore, be surprised that the Doukhobórs, a small minority continually exposed to persecution, had recourse to this practice.

People unwilling to abandon their opinions sometimes speak in this way from lack of clearness of thought, or from lack of power clearly to express them, but sometimes also from the desire to snatch a dialectic victory, or in order to escape the ill-will, or propitiate the favour, of those who do not share their opinions.

"Speech is a faculty enabling man to conceal his thoughts," or more exactly, as Tennyson has it:

> "Words, like Nature, half reveal
> And half conceal the Soul within."

It should further be noted that in the Doukhobór statements of belief we continually find

two different notes. The one is calm, moderate, persuasive, couched almost in the orthodox phraseology of the Eastern Church, but importing a philosophic truth into the conventional phrases, and, at dangerous points, taking refuge in mysticism. The other is clear, resolute, radical; there is no mysticism or secrecy about it; but it is often harsh, contemptuous, and inimical, not merely to all authority in Church and State, but towards all who do not agree at once and absolutely.

It answers to the harshest note sounded by the first generation of Quakers, in their scorn of "steeple-houses" and "hireling priests."

These two notes correspond, no doubt, to the views of the milder and more spiritual Doukhobórs on the one hand, and the more rigid and logical Doukhobórs on the other. Looked at from another side, these different statements of their views may to some extent have corresponded to what they dared to say, and what they wished to say.

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(2) *Our souls existed and fell before the creation of the material universe; they are sent here as to a prison—as a punishment, and for their reformation. The sin of Adam is, like the rest of the Bible stories, figurative. His sin does not pass to his descendants, but each man has sinned for himself.*

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(3) *The Divinity of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, as shown in the Old Testament, was nothing but Wisdom revealed in nature; but in the New Testament He was the Spirit of piety, purity, etc., incarnate. He is born, preaches, suffers,*

dies, and rises again spiritually in the heart of each believer.

Here, again, there is no denial of the Jesus who lived in Palestine 1900 years ago; and it is open to anybody using this phraseology to think what they like about him. But the emphasis is laid on the "Christ within." And the same cause of confusion is present here as was present in early Quaker doctrine. Whenever people use the same word for two different things (*e.g.* for Jesus of Nazareth and for the spirit which actuates man's conscience) they are in danger of not quite knowing what they mean themselves.

In another part of his book, Novítsky remarks that some Doukhobórs of his day said of Jesus Christ that

> *"He is the Son of God, but in the same sense in which we also are Sons of God. Our elders know even more than Christ did: go and hear them." Of miracles they said "We believe that He performed miracles; we ourselves were dead in sin, blind, and deaf, and He has raised us up, pardoned our sins and given us his commandment; but of bodily miracles we know nothing."*

It would be easy on other points to give similar instances of the fact that the Doukhobór faith admitted of considerable divergence of view.

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(4) *For our salvation it is not essential to have an external knowledge of Jesus Christ; for there is the inward word which reveals him in the depths of our souls. It existed in all ages, and enlightens all who are ready to receive it, whether they be nominally Christians or not.*

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(5) *Those enlightened by the spirit of God will after death rise again,—what will become of other people is uncertain. It is the soul and not the body that will rise,* said the Tambóff Doukhobórs, while the Ekaterinosláff Doukhobórs mentioned a body also, *but a new, heavenly body.*

Desires reaching man through his senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, or touching, including sexual desire, sow the seeds of future torment. The craving for honours now torments the ambitious man, and the craving for drink the drunkard—but much more will those who have sown the seeds of such desire be tormented in the future life, when they will not be able to gratify the passions which will nevertheless grow stronger and stronger.

The fire of abuse and contempt will burn and torment those who have striven for honours; the fire of aversion, shame, and loathing will be the consequence of impure love; and the flames of fury, enmity, revenge, rancour and implacability will punish anger.

If this is the result of sowing evil passions in this life, on the other hand the result of sowing good seed will be continued growth towards perfection till the purified souls become like God Himself.

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(6) *Our bodies are cages restraining and confining our souls, and as the passions sow the seeds of evil, we should deny our lower selves, forgo what pleases our senses, and thus weaken their power over our souls.* "*If the desire for fame is condemned among them, yet more,*" says Novítsky in another place, "*is luxury in food or dress, because luxury, indulging the flesh, strengthens it to stifle the inward light coming from above.*"

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(7) *Inasmuch as all men are equal, and the children of God do good willingly, without coercion, they do not require*

*any government or authority over them. Government, if needed at all, is needed only for the wicked.**

To go to war, to carry arms, and to take oaths—is forbidden. "*Regarding war as a forbidden thing, they say they have set themselves a rule not to carry arms,*" remarks Novítsky.

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(8) *The Church is a society selected by God himself. It is invisible and is scattered over the whole world; it is not marked externally by any common creed. Not Christians only but Jews, Mohammedans and others may be members of it, if only they hearken to the inward word: and therefore—*

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(9) *The Holy Scriptures, or the outer word, are not essential for the sons of God. It is, however, of use to them because in the Scriptures, as in nature and in ourselves, they read the decrees and the acts of the Lord. But the Scriptures must be understood symbolically to represent things that are inward and spiritual. It must all be understood to relate in a mystical manner to the Christ within.*

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(10) *The Christ within is the only true Hierarch and Priest. Therefore no external priest is necessary. In whomever Christ lives, he is Christ's heir, and is himself a priest unto himself. The priests of Temples made with hands are appointed externally, and can perform only what is external: they are not what they are usually esteemed to be.*

The sons of God should worship God in spirit and in truth, and, therefore, need no external worship of God. The external sacraments have no efficacy; they should be

* Their doctrine "*reaches even to social intercourse among people: external position has no importance, for by nature all men are akin and equals one of another.*"

understood in a spiritual sense. To baptise a child with water is unbecoming for a Christian; an adult baptises himself with the word of truth, and is then baptised, indeed, by the true Priest, Christ, with spirit and with fire.

True Confession is heartfelt contrition before God, though we may also confess our sins one to another when occasion presents itself.

The external Sacraments of the Church are offensive to God, for Christ desires not signs but realities; the real communion comes by the word, by thought, and by faith.

Marriage should be accomplished without any ceremonies; it needs only the will of those who have come of age and who are united in love to one another, the consent of the parents, and an inward oath and vow, before all-seeing God, in the souls of those who are marrying, that they will to the end of their days remain faithful and inseparable. An external marriage ceremony, apart from the inward marriage, has no meaning: it has at most this effect, that, being performed before witnesses, it maintains the bond between the spouses by the fear of shame should they break the promise of fidelity they have given.

The Priesthood is not an office reserved for specially selected people: each real Christian, enlightened by the word, may and should pray to God for himself, and should spread the truth that has been entrusted to him.

"What am I then? A Temple to the Lord most high.
The Altar and the Priest, the Sacrifice am I.
Our Hearts the Altars are; our Wills the Offering;
Our Souls they are the Priests, our Sacrifice to bring."

The forms of worship of all the external Churches in the world, their various institutions, all the ranks and orders of their servants, their costumes and movements, were invented after the time of the Apostles—those men of holy wisdom—and are in themselves naught but dead signs, mere figures and letters, externally representing that sacred,

invisible, living and wise power of God, which (like the sun's rays) enlightens and pervades the souls of the elect, and lives and acts in them, purifying them, and uniting them to God.

To pray in Temples made with hands is contrary to the injunction of the Saviour: "When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." (Matt. vi. 6.)

Yet a son of God need not fear to enter any Temples—Papal, Greek, Lutheran, Calvinist, or other: to him they are all indifferent,

taught Silouán Kolésnikoff, whom the Ekaterinosláff Doukhobórs at the end of the eighteenth century looked upon as the founder of their sect.

His followers went a step further and added that, *all the ceremonies of the Churches, being useless, were much better left alone.*

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(11) *Icons they do not respect or worship, but consider as idols.*

The Saints may be respected for their virtues, but should not be prayed to.

Fasting should consist in fleeing from lusts and refraining from superfluities.

The Decrees of the Churches and the Councils should not be accepted.

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(12) *The Church has no right to judge or to sentence anyone; for it cannot know all man's inward, secret motives.*

Such is Novítsky's account of the faith of the Doukhobórs. Writing in condemnation of their opinions, and ever ready to attribute any evil he notes among them to the effects of their unorthodoxy, he yet bears witness as follows:—"To

the credit of the Doukhobórs, one must say that they are sober, laborious, and frugal; that in their houses and clothing they are careful to be clean and tidy; that they are attentive to their agriculture and cattle-breeding, occupations which have been and still are their chief employment."

He bears no testimony to their having been vegetarians or total abstainers from intoxicants in his time, though he alludes to the food and drink question more than once. With reference to their disapproval of war, besides a clear statement of their principles, he incidentally mentions more than one instance of Doukhobórs refusing the army-service. For instance: "In 1820, when the Doukhobórs taken as recruits refused to take the oath or to serve because it was contrary to their religion, the Council of State decreed: 'without releasing them from any State obligation, to abstain from compelling them to take the oath in any form or manner whatever'; and this enactment," remarks Novítsky, "was Imperially confirmed for ever." Read to-day in connection with the history of the recent persecution, the remark reads rather strangely.

As becomes a member of the Orthodox Russian Church, writing a book that was to issue from the printing-press of the Kieff-Catacomb Monastery, Novítsky is emphatic as to the failings of the Doukhobórs; but the evident care with which his account is compiled, and the fact that the faults he attributes to them are (allowing for some exaggeration) those to which they are

most prone to-day, entitle him to be heard on the matter.

He says that superstition, anger, and quarrels were prevalent among them, and "the distinguishing trait in their character is obstinacy in their doctrine, insubordination to the Authorities, insults and slanders towards those who differ from them." "They are very eager to get money." "They consider themselves more enlightened than all who differ from them." (Which, by the way, is a trait not peculiar to Doukhobórs.)

Since they have been collected into one community, he reports "the dissensions and agitations whereby they formerly so often disturbed the public order have ceased, but the sect itself has seethed and surged with many passions."

"Formerly the Doukhobórs expelled certain members from their community for certain acts: to-day such expulsions no longer occur; but if anyone in their opinion does not quite partake of the Spirit, such a one is subjected to slander, and in consequence, under various pretexts, is greatly persecuted" (without recourse to physical violence be it understood).

It is, at the present day, remarkable to what an extent the will of the individual Doukhobór appears to be subjected to the communal conscience. And the suggestion of a certain amount of social tyranny as one of the agencies which have made them what they now are, should not be entirely put aside, even after full allowance has been made for the unifying effects of a common, simple

and laborious life, among religious and serious people, who settle their differences without appeal to law or violence.

Of the fact that, in common with many other religious disputants, they were not above twisting facts to suit their theories, Novítsky gives the following instance:—

"Affirming to strangers not belonging to their sect that they have no need of an external revelation, they will state that they have no Bible among them; yet, to all questions put to them concerning their faith, they reply with words chosen from the Holy Scriptures."

If they were more cautious than most Christians of asserting the Incarnation of Jesus, they had, according to Novítsky, less hesitation in attributing divinity to other "sons of God." "It is known," says he, "that in 1816 they chose Kapóustin" (who was their leader though Novítsky does not mention this), "and on holidays bowed before him as before the Deity." "They have many other superstitious customs, which, however, they diligently hide from other people."

Of the theory and intention of their community Novítsky says: "And thus it is an Ultra-Theocracy, in which everything, not only in the inner life of the Christian, but also in the external life of the citizen, is to take place under the immediate control, and with the co-operation, of the Deity Himself, by means of inward, universal inspiration and revelation from above."

As to the gap which existed—and always exists

—between what was aimed at and what was achieved, Novítsky is explicit enough. But his account leaves the impression that then, as now, the sect had less of violence, crime, vice, poverty, superstition, luxury or wretchedness among them than was common among their neighbours. And if we are to compare creed with creed, let us be careful also to compare people with people. If only people in general would compare what they themselves are doing with what other people are aiming at (instead of doing just the opposite, and contrasting their own ideals with the results attained by others), there would be more humility and toleration even in our opinion of the heathen Chinee.

In practice the Doukhobór Theocracy became, in course of time, a one-man power based, to some extent, on custom, also, perhaps, partly on superstition, and more absolute than that of most monarchs.

The rejection of all Church rites, has not prevented the establishment, by custom, of meetings for worship, with forms as definite, and maintained as strictly as those of most Churches.

But with all their limitations and deficiencies, with their history for nearly a century before us, one may fairly say of the Doukhobórs that (except in times of external persecution) without any Government founded on force, they have managed their affairs better than their neighbours have done: with no army or police, they have suffered little from crimes of violence; and without priests

or ministers, they have had more practical religion, and more intelligible guidance for their spiritual life. Without doctors or medicine or bacteriologist (though ignorant even of the first principles of ventilation) they have been, on the average, healthier and stronger than most other races. Without political economists, wealth among them has been better distributed, and they have (apart from the effects of persecution) suffered far less from extremes of wealth and poverty. Without lawyers or written laws, they have settled their disputes. Without books, they have educated their children to be industrious, useful, peaceable, and God-fearing men and women, have instructed them in the tenets of their religion, and taught them to produce the food, clothing, and shelter needed for themselves and for others.

As a community they are to-day abstainers from alcohol, non-smokers, and, for the most part, vegetarians. Their vegetarianism seems to have been strict during the persecution from 1895 to 1898 but to have relaxed in Canada, where some of them are located near lakes or rivers teeming with fish, which they catch and eat. Among Russian peasants in general many traces of communistic habits may be found, but among the Doukhobórs communism was carried much further, and—though there has been a considerable ebb and flow in this matter at different times—broadly speaking, communism may be said to have formed part both of their religious principles and their usual social practice.

Their fundamental doctrine that men gifted with reason and conscience should not use physical violence one to another, but should influence one another by the appeal of mind to mind and of soul to soul, is essentially anarchistic (in the best sense of that word), and it is naturally disliked by all authorities whose reliance is on sword or truncheon. In Russia the alliance between Church and State is exceedingly close. The "render unto Cæsar" text is worked even harder than among ourselves, and is held to imply that the rendering *unto Cæsar* of heart and mind and soul and strength is a virtue. "The powers that be" are held to be not merely "ordained by God," but to be approved of by God, whatever line of conduct they pursue. To resist them is to resist God, and their most iniquitous proceedings are as sacrosant in the eyes of the official Church as the war policy of the English Government is in the eyes of pot-house patriots, or of a majority of our own priests and bishops.

Under these circumstances it is not strange that the measure of toleration extended under Alexander I. was not of long duration. Possibly the folly or misconduct of certain Doukhobórs afforded an excuse, but at anyrate the Doukhobórs were ultimately banished from the "Milky Waters" to the Wet Mountains in Georgia.

A Committee of Ministers held in Petersburg on 6th February 1826, with reference to a project of transporting to the Caucasus some Cossacks who had become Doukhobórs, expressed the opinion

that: "The utility of this measure is evident; being transported to the extreme borders of the Caucasus, and being always confronted by the hillsmen, they must of necessity protect their property and families by force of arms." In fact, the probability seemed very great that in Georgia, where Shámyl was carrying on his thirty years' guerilla warfare against the Russians, the Doukhobórs would be exterminated unless they abandoned their principles.

Some fifteen years later this plan of transportation was applied to the main body of the Doukhobórs, but when carried out its results were not what had been expected.

The wild hill tribes were favourably impressed by their non-resistant neighbours, who, when molested, neither retaliated nor sought police protection; and on coming to know the Doukhobórs, the Mohammedan tribes in their vicinity decided that they were a worthy people deserving protection, and that they were certainly not Christians. "We know the Christians," said they; "the Christians always fight." These new-comers evidently belonged to a better religion, for they tried to return good for evil. So the Mohammedans concluded that this sober, God-fearing, industrious folk were inheritors of the True Faith, which they—the ignorant natives of the district—had forgotten or neglected.

The climate of the Wet Mountains was severe. Situate 5000 feet above the sea-level, wheat could not be cultivated, and even barley grew there

with difficulty. But the Doukhobórs, by industry, mutual helpfulness, simplicity of life, and the great economy possible under a communal organisation, succeeded in prospering; and as time went on they spread out, and fifty years later we find them numbering some 20,000 people settled in three parts of the Caucasus. One of the settlements was in the part of what used to be Georgia now known as the Tiflis Government, another was in the Elizavetpól Government, and a third in Russian Armenia, now called the "Kars Territory." In parts where cultivation was specially difficult they occupied themselves in breeding cattle, and one way or another they prospered and became a well-to-do peasantry.

After the death of Loukérya Vasílyevna Kalmykóva, who for many years after the death of her husband acted as the chieftainess of the Doukhobórs, a quarrel arose as to the disposal of a considerable property which had been in her charge. The majority (the "Large Party") of the Doukhobórs acknowledged Peter Verígin (said by some to be an illegitimate son of the husband of Kalmykóva) as the real heir to the leadership, and to the charge of the communal property. Others (the "Small Party") sided with L. V. Kalmykóva's brother, who claimed the estate. Appeal was made to the Russian law. This indicates how bitter the dispute was, and how far the Doukhobórs had strayed from their principles, for no use of the law-courts had been made by them for some fifty years previously.

To bribe the police, or to yield to their extortions, had become quite a common practice, and on this occasion some of the "Small Party" seem to have gone the length of wholesale bribery in order to gain their ends. The property was adjudged to belong to L. V. Kalmykóva's brother, and the Doukhobórs split into two hostile groups.

Since the Doukhobórs first settled at the Milky Waters they have had five leaders:

1. Pobiróhin.
2. Kapoústin.
3. Kalmykóv.
4. His wife, L. V. Kalmykóva.
5. Peter Verígin.

Against the first two of these grave but unverified charges have been made. As already mentioned, the manner of selection of these leaders, and the degree of authority wielded by them, is a knotty point. One theory is that each of them (with the exception of L. V. Kalmykóva, who obtained the leadership during her husband's life) was the son of the preceding leader. The curious point about the matter is that, if so, in each case the son was illegitimate. This, if true, is all the more remarkable because the Doukhobórs are far from being loose in their sexual morality. It would, I believe, be difficult to find a class of people equally large, among whom there is less immorality, or among whom the family bond is more regarded. Whether any special relaxation of the moral law, such as that which Mohammed

claimed for himself, or such as is often allowed to the members of our royal families, was accorded to the Doukhobór leaders, I am unable to say. There seems to be something mysterious about the matter, which the Doukhobórs are reluctant to have investigated even by those who sympathise with them in their general views.

It should, however, be mentioned that some of their friends stoutly maintain that the new chief is selected by a process similar to that natural selection which enables the English political parties to discover their leaders, and that the extreme deference shown to their chiefs' decisions is a mere result of the reasonableness of the Doukhobórs in submitting to those wiser than themselves.

Verígin, though said to have been wild in his youth, on assuming authority showed himself to be a man of great capacity and strong religious convictions. Since he has been exiled to Siberia he has written a series of remarkable letters, and, having become acquainted with Tolstoy's writings, has expressed himself as sharing his view of life. He became the leader of a remarkable religious revival in the sect, among the outward manifestations of which were a redistribution of possessions, a great extension of communist practice, strict abstinence from strong drinks and tobacco, the destruction of all such arms as any of the Doukhobórs of the *Large Party* possessed, and a stricter adherence to non-resistant principles.

This brings us to a crisis in the history. The Conscription, by which almost all healthy adult males became liable for army service, was introduced into the Caucasus in 1887. At first the Doukhobórs complied with the law and let their young men enter the army, warning them, however, not to become murderers, and to be sure, if they had to go to battle, to shoot high so as not to hit anybody.

They had for many years lived at peace with the authorities, paying their taxes accurately, and paying, or rather bribing, the police to let them alone. It is, therefore, not surprising that it took them some time to muster resolution to refuse Conscription. But when the revival among the "Large Party" took place, the question of war and army service was re-considered, and it was agreed among them that they would no longer learn to slay their fellow-men. They thus came into line, on this matter, with the Quakers, the Mennonites, the Austrian sect of Nazarenes, the other non-resistant bodies, and with the opinions they had themselves professed, and to some extent practised, for generations.

Characteristically enough, among the Doukhobórs the decision to refuse army service was taken in consequence of a message sent early in 1895 by Peter Verígin. He had been exiled to Kóla in the Government of Archangel, but as he found means to continue to influence the Doukhobórs from that place, his removal to still less accessible quarters near the mouth of the Óbi in Siberia was decided

on. On his way from Kóla to Siberia he was brought to Moscow, and was there visited by Doukhobórs, through whom he sent the message referred to.

A severe persecution was the result of the refusal. It is difficult to apportion the blame between the Petersburg Government and the local authorities, but it is clear that the latter commenced the persecution, and to some extent misreported what they had done to the higher authorities. It must be admitted that the Government found themselves in a very uncomfortable position. The more clearly the thought that men should help and not harm each other is expressed, the more certainly it is seen to be true. The more sincerely the spirit of Christianity is considered, the more plainly is it seen to make for peace and goodwill, even towards enemies and foreigners. These thoughts, when backed by the example of men willing to be killed rather than to kill others, have a great infectious force. Cases occurred in which guards escorting non-resistants, were converted by their prisoners on the road, or on board ship on their way to Sagalien, and the fact that the whole military machine may some day go to pieces began to suggest itself to those in power.

To continue persecution under such circumstances is dangerous, yet to allow exemptions on religious grounds is hardly possible in a military empire. Were the Doukhobórs exempted from Conscription, they would probably soon out-

number the Orthodox. For, in general, the Russian peasant, struggling to escape from the constant danger of famine, no more wishes to have his son taken for army service, than our famine-threatened subjects in India wish to be taxed for the maintenance of a scientific north-west frontier to guard against those same poor Russian peasants.

The authorities were face to face with the fact that a compact body of men, numbering several thousands, had adopted peace-at-any-price principles, and asserted that it is wrong for men to kill each other. As, among us, there is no longer any question of the comparative cost of slave-labour *versus* wage-labour, but we, as a matter of principle, have renounced all right to own our fellow-men, so it was no question of expediency with the Doukhobórs: they decided the matter on the ground that a man should be ready to die rather than to do wrong, and that to slay our fellow-men is *wrong*. Not even the power of the Russian Empire could induce them to yield the point. They no more shrank from being peaceful at any price, than the best men among us shrink from being honest at any price, or truthful at any price.

The first Doukhobórs to suffer in this recent persecution were those who were serving in the army at the time. They laid down their arms, explaining that, as Christians, they could no longer learn war. But it is the very essence of the military system that when once a man has taken oaths of allegiance and obedience, he ceases to be

a free man, actuated by reason and conscience, and becomes an automaton:

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to"—kill or die.

And it was only natural that soldiers who still ventured to question the right and wrong of what they were doing, should be court-martialled. The first twelve tried were sentenced to confinement in the Ekaterinográd penal-battalion, and were there subjected to a long series of continually renewed punishments—floggings, confinement in a cold, dark cell, a diet of bread and water, and many other hardships. In August 1896, Michael Sherbínin died, done to death by floggings and by being thrown over the vaulting-horse in the penal-battalion gymnasium. He was not the first or by any means the only martyr among the Doukhobórs who suffered violent death for his principles. But the wind bloweth where it listeth—and neither oaths of allegiance nor the stupefying effects of discipline can be depended on permanently to shut out from men's hearts and minds the ideals of the prophets and the aspirations of the saints. When the test came, events showed that among these common, illiterate Doukhobórs, along with obvious faults and limitations of their own, there dwelt a large measure of the spirit of martyrs and the courage of heroes, and so wonderful are the workings of the Holy Spirit that those whose faults and limitations in ordinary life may be patent to all candid observers, may yet be found faithful unto death in the day of trial.

At last, in the autumn of 1896, an order was issued that those who refused military service on religious grounds should not be kept in military places of detention. Since then the fate of those who, being already soldiers, refused to serve, as also of many who refused to enter the army, has been strangely various. Many were punished with different degrees of severity—imprisonment, banishment for various terms, and floggings of various degrees, while a few escaped almost free from punishment, and others, unable to withstand the pressure put upon them, yielded to the demands made.

The authorities were much perplexed how to act, and their chief anxiety was lest news of what was going on should spread. The Russian press was forbidden to allude to the matter, and any outsider found visiting them was expelled.

The Doukhobórs were not without their sympathisers, even among the officials. Take, for instance, the following passage from *Christian Martyrdom in Russia*, describing the trial of seven Doukhobórs for refusing to draw lots at the Conscription of 1895 in the town of Dushét. It is but one among many cases that could be instanced:

"The Judge: 'And why do you refuse?'

"Glagólieff: 'Because we do not wish to enter the military service, knowing beforehand that such service is against our conscience, and we prefer to live according to our conscience and

not in opposition to it. . . . We would not draw lots because we do not wish to have any share in a business which is contrary to the will of God and to our conscience.'

"The Judge: 'The term of service is now short; you can soon get it over and go home again. Then they will not drag you from court to court, and from prison to prison.'

"Glagólieff: 'Mr Judge, we do not value our bodies. The only thing of importance to us is that our consciences should be clear. We cannot act contrary to the will of God. And it is no light matter to be a soldier, and to kill a man directly you are told. God has once for all impressed on the heart of each man, "Thou shalt not kill." A Christian will not only not learn how to kill, but will never allow one of God's creatures to be beaten.'

"Then said the Judge, 'But, nevertheless, we cannot do without soldiers and war, because both you and others have a little property, and some people are quite rich; and if we had no armies and no soldiers, then evil men would come, and thieves, and would plunder us, and with no army we could not defend ourselves.'

"Then Glagólieff replied, 'You know, Mr Judge, that it is written in the Gospels, "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth." We have obeyed this injunction, and will hold to it, and therefore shall have no need to defend anything. Why, ask yourself, Mr Judge, how we can keep our money when our brothers need it? We are com-

manded to help our neighbours, so that we cannot find rest in our souls when we see them in want. Christ, when he was on earth, taught that we should feed the hungry, give shoes to those who have none, and share with those who are needy.'

"Then the judge began to inquire into our circumstances, and asked how we were getting on, and how the country suited us, all about the distraint, and the Cossacks striking the women and old men, and their outraging the young women, and expressed great astonishment that soldiers, whose duty it was to protect us, could turn themselves into brigands and murderers.

"Then said Glagólieff, 'We see from this, Mr Judge, that an army does not in the least exist for the protection of our interests, but in order that our savings may be spent on armaments, and that it is of no use in the world but to cause misery, outrage, and murder.'

"Then the judge, who had listened to it all attentively, was greatly moved and distressed by all the cruelties which had been practised on the Doukhobórs. He condemned us, according to some section or other of the Code, to a fine of three roubles, and himself advised us not to pay it.

"He talked a great deal more to us, and questioned us, and said, as he dismissed us, 'Hold fast to that commandment of the Lord's.'

"We went to the inn to dine and see our friends, and before we had had any dinner, the judge came to see us, and brought us two roubles, in case we had nothing to eat. We endeavoured

to decline the money, saying, 'We do not want it. Thank God, to-day we shall have enough.' But he begged us to accept it as the offering of a pure heart, and made in sincerity, and then we took it as from a brother, and after thanking him, and bidding him farewell, went away. He showed us where he lived, expressed a wish to know more of us, and begged us to come and talk with him."

That men who refuse military service should be imprisoned, beaten, and sometimes killed, is what occurs in other countries where Conscription is enforced, and if, as is now often suggested, the English Government introduces that system, how they will deal with such cases remains to be seen: will those who refuse to bow the knee to Mars among ourselves be shot, sent to penal servitude, or secretly done to death?

It may be that Conscription will not be introduced in England, but the ominous fact is that it is discussed among us, not on grounds of moral principle, but as a mere question of expediency. When that is the case, things that seem abominable one year may seem inevitable the next. In 1898 Englishmen were shocked that the Spaniards under General Weyler confined non-combatant Cuban *reconcentrados*. But when, in 1900, our own generals adopted a like system in South Africa, it was acquiesced in by us as an inevitable incident, and was referred to with approval as Weylerism by certain prominent newspapers.

What was peculiar about the persecution of the Doukhobórs was the fact that, besides the persecution of those who actually refused to bear arms, one whole settlement — of some 4000 people, men, women, and children — was broken up and dispersed, and the people reduced to such straits that about 1000 of them died off during the persecution of less than three years, that occurred before they were allowed to leave Russia.

As often happens, the final collision did not occur because the one side were all good and the other all bad. In two of the districts where Doukhobórs were settled, the Russian authorities perpetrated no barbarity as bad as those about to be described; but in the Tiflis Government, where the enmity between the "Large Party" and "Small Party" (though it stopped short of manifesting itself by physical violence) was extremely bitter, the authorities were perplexed by the mutual recriminations of the Doukhobórs, and being misled by false reports, suspected the "Large Party" of a design to seize the communal property by force.

Two nights, at the end of June (old style) 1895, were appointed by the Doukhobórs of the "Large Party," on which to burn their arms in evidence of their firm resolve not to use physical force against any of their fellow-men. This assembly appeared suspicious to the authorities, and the Governor, being in the neighbourhood, sent a summons to the Doukhobór elders to appear before him.

A reply was returned, to the effect that they were engaged in praying, and that he should rather come to them, seeing that they were many and he but one.

This appears to have presented itself to the Governor as fresh evidence of conspiracy and insubordination. Cossacks were sent, who flogged the people cruelly with their heavy whips at the very spot where the fire that had destroyed their arms was burning out. The Cossacks were afterwards quartered on the Doukhobór villages as on a conquered people. There the troops misbehaved themselves in a way customary to soldiers under such conditions. Finally, the whole of this Doukhobór settlement was broken up. Successive lots of the inhabitants had to leave their houses and well-cultivated land at three days' notice, and were then dispersed among the Georgian villages. From one to five Doukhobór families were sent to each village in the district.

Left thus with no houses or land, or means of regular livelihood, among a population who, for the most part, were not in the habit of hiring labourers, the position of these "dispersed" Doukhobórs was terrible. Sickness, caused by want and by the sudden change of climate from highlands to malarial valleys, added to their troubles; and the police regulations forbidding them to leave the villages even to look for work, and imposing all sorts of petty exactions and inconveniences upon them,—all combined to create conditions in which a mortality of about 10 per cent. per annum

is easily accounted for. They would, indeed, have perished much more rapidly had not the Kars and Elizavetpól Doukhobórs persevered in rendering generous assistance, despite the fact that communication with the "dispersed" Doukhobórs was prohibited by the police. The policy of the officials was to cut them off from communication with the outside world as completely as possible, and to oblige them to abandon their principles by the practical threat of slowly exterminating them should they refuse to submit.

This policy was never explicitly stated, nor were all the officials of one mind on the matter, but it was clearly the general direction followed in the persecution, and it is the only statement of policy which accords with, and serves to explain, what actually occurred in the Caucasus from 1895 to 1898.

Meanwhile, Leo Tolstoy, and his friends were concerning themselves in the matter. He wrote articles on the subject, and, through the medium of the English press, the facts of the persecution began to be partially known. Already, on October 23rd, 1895, *The Times* published an account of the Doukhobórs, vouched for by a letter from Tolstoy.*

* In a leading article of the same date, *The Times* remarked: "When the evidence . . . is examined, and the nature of the religious beliefs of these sectarians is considered . . . it becomes evident that no Government which discharged its primary function of enforcing the laws could tolerate the proceedings of" the Doukhobórs. This suggests the query whether the primary duty of Governments is to enforce bad laws or to repeal them.

Publicity was obtained, and publicity is what Governments engaged in persecuting a sect, or exterminating a people, do not like.

Vladimir Tchertkóff, with two friends, went to Petersburg and tried to present a petition to the Tsar. This they failed to accomplish, and, after having their books and papers seized, they were banished. Vladimir Tchertkóff was allowed to leave Russia, and, settling in England, occupied himself in publishing the works of Tolstoy, as well as news of the Doukhobórs and kindred literature, in both Russian and English.

While news of the persecution was slowly becoming public in such ways as these, an inquiry was instituted from Petersburg, and a General was appointed to investigate the whole matter, to hear the Doukhobórs' statement of their own case, to explain to them their errors, and to offer them restoration of land and property if they would take the oaths of allegiance and submit to Conscription. A number of Doukhobór elders were summoned to appear before him. He heard what they had to say, discussed the matter, did all he could to persuade them to yield by holding out strong inducements, and ultimately went as far as most of our own clergy or officials would be prepared to go: he said that in theory their views were excellent, that he, too, would like wars to cease, and all men to live together in harmony, and that it may some day come to pass —but that the mistake made by the Doukhobórs was that they wished to do right before other

people were ready for it. "The time," said he, "has not yet come."

"The time, General," replied these illiterate peasants, "may not yet have come for you—but it has come for us!"

That answer expresses the fundamental principle of the coming Reformation. The Scribes and Pharisees of to-day would have us all believe that our hopes, beliefs, aspirations, and conduct should be shaped according to the decisions of certain external authorities—church dignitaries, divinely appointed rulers, or representatives of infallible majorities. Some kind of automatic self-acting evolution is to decide when any improvement of the existing order of things may be permissible. Our rulers will legislate accordingly, and it will be our duty to think, feel, and act in submission to their decrees; but, as yet, "the time has not come," and we must all go on acting wrongly till "the evolutionary process" does the work of Reform for us.

The other view is, that the ultimate authority in matters of belief, feeling, and action is the inward voice—that divine guidance given us through the medium of reason and conscience.

The more humbly and faithfully we hearken to that, the more rapid will be our progress—and that of the society to which we belong—towards perfection. And when any man sees the path clear before him "the time has come," though the authorities of Church and State should oppose the advance as strenuously as they opposed the

teaching of the early Christians and of the first Protestants, or the struggle for religious freedom in England and for the emancipation of the slaves in America.

The inspiration that breathed on men of old has not ceased to act, nor has it ever been confined to any race, or age, or class. The Hebrew prophet Isaiah, the Catholic St Francis, the Indian Prince Buddha, the American tailor John Woolman, the Russian Count Tolstoy, and the Doukhobór peasant elder who said "the time has come for us"—were all, in their degree, led by the Holy Spirit and, from time to time, spoke the word of God.

At last, early in 1898, permission to leave Russia was given to the Doukhobórs on condition (1) that they should go at their own expense; (2) that those who had been called on for military service, and those (including Peter Verígin) who were in Siberia, should remain; and (3) that if any of those who left, ever returned, they should be banished to distant parts of Siberia.

As the Doukhobórs were an illiterate peasant sect, ignorant of foreign languages and of geography, of whom many had been reduced to the verge of starvation, and all had been impoverished by exactions and by the drain of supporting those who had been exiled and dispersed, it seemed at first almost impossible for them to avail themselves of this permission, more especially as communication between them and the outside world

was continually interrupted, and all educated people who had shown a disposition to assist them actively, had been banished from the Caucasus.

There was no Moses to lead them to a promised land, and, though volunteer workers sprang up in different places, they had no central organisation, no common language, no business manager, and no plan of action. Each helper gave his services voluntarily, paid his own expenses if he could,—if not, the money was scraped together as best might be. Co-operation established itself somehow, not without blunders, mistakes, friction, and even quarrels. In one way or another an informal alliance came into existence, with its volunteer agents in the Caucasus, Moscow, London, Gloucester, Purleigh (Essex), Toronto, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and elsewhere. People supplied information, made the matter public, offered suggestions, subscribed funds, helped and encouraged one another, and did what they saw their way to do, until 7363 Doukhobórs were established in Canada some hundreds of miles North-West of Winnipeg.

The movement accomplished itself in a wonderful manner—it was, to some of us, a first lesson in constructive anarchy. First an attempt was made to get some of the Doukhobórs to Cyprus. Before this was accomplished, however, Prince D. A. Hilkóff and two Doukhobór delegates reported that the soil, climate, and other conditions of the island would not be suitable for them; but, owing partly to the difficulty of com-

municating with the sect, partly to their urgent haste to escape from Russia, and partly to a lack of cohesion among those who wished to help, a migration of 1126 Doukhobórs, took place to that island at the end of August 1898. Half-a-year later they re-migrated to join their co-religionists in Canada.

Prince D. A. Hilkóff, a nephew of the Russian Minister of Ways of Communication (*i.e.* railways, roads, canals, etc.), is a man whose Memoirs, part of which have been printed in Russian, seem to me to surpass in interest even those of his celebrated compatriot Prince P. Kropótkin.

How, being an officer in the army, he defied his superiors and refused to make up fictitious accounts of the provender, etc., supplied to the regiment. How he carried his point and waged war on a dishonest contractor of high rank. Of his friendship with Samát, who was a Tartar brigand, a murderer, an escaped Siberian exile, a Russian officer of distinction, an influential official, and "one of the best men I ever knew." How popular he was with his men; how, after killing a Turk in battle and capturing his horse, he was unhappy and resolved to leave the army, and being unable to do so at once continued to risk his own life, thoroughly determined not again to shed blood. How he first made acquaintance with the Doukhobórs and learned that *icons* should not be reverenced. How he left the army and settled on his estates. How he sympathised with the peasants — and handed his land over to them.

How successful he was in practical agriculture. How he came to loggerheads with the district priests, was banished to the Caucasus, and lived among the Doukhobórs. How grasping and selfish some of them had at that time become, and how difficult it was to get at their secret religious beliefs. How (two of his children having been taken from him to be brought up in Orthodoxy) he was again banished to a small town in the Baltic Provinces. How he was allowed to leave Russia but forbidden to return, etc., etc., make up the record of a career the interest of which is not lessened by the fact that the hero shares in the faults and the mistakes of common mortality.

On the 1st September 1898, D. A. Hilkóff, two Doukhobór families who had come over as delegates, and I—twelve of us in all—left Liverpool on our way to Canada to inquire into the feasibility of a settlement of Doukhobórs in that country. A very successful settlement of Mennonites, who refused military service, had been made some twenty years before, also from Russia; but the southern parts of Canada, where most of them settled, are now too fully peopled to allow of further wholesale migrations being made to the same districts. Farther north the danger of "frozen wheat," resulting from late spring frosts, prevents settlers from adopting the lines followed by the Mennonites, who depended on wheat-growing as their staple industry.

On reaching Canada we found the task before us easier than we had expected. The Canadian Government are anxious to attract immigrants. Its representatives whom we had to do with were quite inclined to consider our proposals favourably, took much trouble to meet the unusual circumstances of the case, and afforded us every possible assistance.

Their inspection of our "sample" Doukhobórs resulted in a verdict which was expressed by someone saying: "If the bulk of your goods are up to sample—send them along."

A "bonus" of £1 per immigrant (in lieu of bonus paid to steamship agents in the case of other immigrants), the usual free grant of 160 acres of land to each male over eighteen years of age, and a promise of as much shelter in Immigration Halls, and assistance from Immigration Officials as possible, helped matters greatly.

An Order in Council was also passed (6th December 1898) to the effect that the Doukhobórs, on an equality with the Mennonites, Quakers, and other non-resistant sects, should be exempt from any form of military service.

The land for the Doukhobórs was allotted chiefly in the north-west corner of Assiniboia, but part of it somewhat farther to the north-west, in Saskatchewan,—the nearest railway stations for the Assiniboian settlements being Yorkton and Swan River. The difficult task of selecting the land devolved chiefly on Prince Hilkóff, whose practical knowledge of farming

qualified him admirably for the business. The amount of land required was large, and as the Doukhobórs wished not to be scattered, but to live in villages which were to be as nearly within reach of each other as possible, only those districts could suit in which many miles of free land were available. The land itself had to be good, and a supply of timber for building was wanted; the water supply had also to be considered.

To find such large unoccupied tracts of land it was necessary to go rather far north. The rights, scattered over the country, of railway and other companies to "alternate sections" of land, helped to complicate matters. Again, some districts had to be avoided because a settlement of foreigners would not have been welcome to the inhabitants—nor would it be difficult to extend the list of difficulties to be contended against. On the whole, though some mistakes were made, the land chosen has proved satisfactory, and as year by year the area of cultivation extends, there seems every reason to believe that the Doukhobór Colonies will prosper.

The Canadian Pacific Railway helped matters by agreeing to exchange alternate sections of land owned by them for an equal amount of Government land situated elsewhere, and also by granting an exceedingly cheap rate for transit from the coast to the settlements—a distance of over 2000 miles.

No sooner was it evident that Canada offered a suitable refuge for the Doukhobórs than the

migration commenced, and it was accomplished within six months of the day, in December 1898, on which Mr James A. Smart, Deputy Minister of the Interior, signed a letter stating the amount of assistance the Canadian Government were willing to render. The matter was exceedingly urgent, as many of the Doukhobórs were perishing in Russia. They were, however, too far away to be communicated with, except by cable to the British Consul in Batóum, who, in his turn, could only get at a limited number of Doukhobórs. They were moreover, too scattered to be able to consult systematically with one another or with their friends. Peter Verigín was in Siberia; Leo Tolstoy was in Moscow; Vladimir Tchertkóff was at Purleigh.

Much help was rendered by the Society of Friends, in London* (Quakers), who were, in the first instance, specially concerned about the Doukhobórs who went to Cyprus, but subsequently undertook the task of chartering the vessels for the other Doukhobórs also, and have since not ceased to interest themselves in the whole community.

The American "Friends" centred in Philadelphia also showed much interest in this anti-war movement, and rendered generous assistance. But the curious thing about the migration to Canada is that no one can say who was responsible for it—it was like a "soldiers' battle" in which there was no Commander-in-Chief.

* Among the most active workers were John Bellows, Edmund W. Brooks, and Wilson Sturge. The last-named went to Cyprus on behalf of the Doukhobórs, worked hard on their behalf and died on the voyage home.

In December 1898 Russian style, but in January 1899 new style, the *S.S. Lake Huron* left the Port of Batóum, carrying about 2100 Doukhobórs—men, women, and children—under the able direction of another volunteer leader, Leopold Soulerjítsky.

Soulerjítsky was a young man who had himself suffered many things for refusing military service in Russia, a refusal which broke down when he was induced to believe that his conduct was preying on the mind and endangering the life of his old father.

The voyage of the *Lake Huron* broke the record of previous migrations across the Atlantic: never before had 2100 people gone on one ship to America to become permanent settlers there. On 23rd January, after nearly a month's voyage, they reached Halifax in Nova Scotia, not before some of the Doukhobór women had lost faith in Soulerjítsky and given themselves up for lost. To induce them to take plenty of fresh air, he deluded them into looking out for land when they were only half across the Atlantic. After a few days of this, he saw some of the women looking very dejected, and when he asked what was the matter they shook their heads dismally, and told him the steamer had "lost its way." Inquiring why they thought so, he was told that the time by the watches no longer agreed with the sun, and that the sun that used to rise on one side of the vessel now rose on the other! Nothing he could say at the time quite dispelled their fears; but in due course land really was seen, and a

cordial welcome awaited the Doukhobórs on their arrival in the New World.

The *Lake Huron* was soon followed across the Atlantic by the *Lake Superior*, and each of these vessels made a second trip, so that by June 1899, over 7360 Doukhobórs had reached Canada, leaving the "Small Party" in the Caucasus, and about 110 of the "Large Party" exiles in Siberia.

Before the winter (1899-1900) came on, the Doukhobórs were all housed in their new settlements, and by the next winter they were reported to be quite as well provided for as the average agricultural settler is during his first years in a new country.

One characteristic story of an incident which occurred soon after the arrival of the Doukhobórs in America deserves to be recorded. A Canadian boy, playing with some Doukhobór children, was accidentally hurt, and went home crying to his father. The latter, enraged with the Russians who had hurt his son, rushed out, but all the Doukhobór children had run off, except one boy, who had not been playing at all, but was sitting near by. The man kicked this boy so violently that the lad died from the injuries received. The Doukhobórs thereupon signed a memorial expressing their sorrow at the boy's death, but asking that the man who killed him should not be punished.

Such an attitude towards crimes of violence tends to their diminution far more than threats of imprisonment or execution can do. Among the

Doukhobórs themselves, as among all sects who regard violence as being wrong, crimes of violence are exceedingly rare.

The communal customs of the Doukhobórs show signs of breaking down in Canada, where material prosperity is attainable by all who are capable of working vigorously. But it is noticeable that those villages which have retained their communism have made their resources go farthest, and have increased the number of their oxen and horses more rapidly than the individualistic villages have done. With regard to friction among themselves, it is noticeable that communal villages can get on smoothly, and so can villages which have definitely adopted individualistic methods, but much dissension usually accompanies the transition — *i.e.* when the people do not quite know how to treat each other, or what to expect from one another. The difference between behaving well to one's neighbours where settled customs exist and where they have been broken up, is as great as the difference between walking along a beaten track and walking over rough and broken land.

There is every reason to expect the Doukhobór settlement in Canada to be a successful one. The people are anxious to learn English, and help in that important matter is being rendered them.

Without wishing them to become subject to the medical and bacteriological superstitions current in our own country, we may hope that they will, in time, be induced to ventilate their

houses, and abstain from the ridiculous incantations over the sick which many of them now practise.

With reference to their children, I think any one who has seen how obedient, considerate, and quick to be of use the Doukhobór children usually are, will be inclined to admit that most of us have much to learn from these people on the subject of education. Even regarding instruction (as apart from education proper), their knowledge of agriculture and of useful handicrafts, coupled with a serious attention to religion as a guide to daily life, are more likely to help them to live useful and happy lives than any knowledge of vulgar fractions or of the eccentricities of English orthography could do.

I have told the story of the Doukhobórs with no wish to hide their faults or exaggerate their virtues, for I am convinced that to identify men with principles is to do an injustice to both. When a schoolboy reduces apples and pears to shillings and pence he shows that he does not understand his sum; and when we confound principles with people, it shows that we understand neither religion nor our fellow-men.

As to the main principle touched on in this article—that of non-resistance—I have intimated my belief that it is a true one, and I will add that its clear enunciation at the close of the century now past, seems to me likely to mark the commencement of the next great advance

humanity must make. Do we safeguard our lives, or do we endanger them by preparing to slay our fellow-men? Is it not true that by seeking to maintain our physical existence and our material possessions we are, all the time, foregoing that higher life which can exist only where goodness and love are present?

These questions are not answered by the usual blatant assertion that there are wicked foreigners ("confound their knavish tricks") who would come and kill us if we took the teachings of Christ seriously. An increasing number of people are beginning to see the importance of these questions, which must become more and more prominent as time goes on.

As for the Doukhobórs themselves, who can fail to feel sympathy and admiration for a folk who have suffered so much for conscience sake? But who can wisely and reasonably attempt to sum up and give a collective character to a sect of several thousand living, thinking, feeling human beings, whose development and evolution is going on from day to day, and who now find themselves in new and unaccustomed surroundings?

The past history of the sect, and of all sects, warns us not to expect them either to remain unchanged, or constantly to move steadily forward. To the enthusiasm and love of the early Christian Church, what venom and heresy-hunting succeeded! How the mighty strength of simple truth, exposing the claims of Rome to dominate men's minds and consciences, gave

place to unhealthy suspicion, and to the "no-popery" animus which has since poisoned the mind of many Protestants, generation after generation. Or, to take a case yet more closely in point: how strange it seems that the first generation of Quakers,—full of zeal, earnest, conscientious, and willing to suffer to the death, if need be, rather than yield that obedience to man which is due only to God speaking in man's heart and mind—should have spent ten years in a most bitter dispute among themselves as to whether they should, or should not, wear hats in their religious meetings!

For any one to attempt to foretell at what point temptation will assail the Doukhobórs would be rash. The unexpected is what usually happens in such cases. I have, however, already alluded to one danger. Peter Verígin appears to be an excellent and a very able man, holding views similar to those of Tolstoy. Yet if it be true that many of the Doukhobórs reverence him with a superstitious regard rivalling that of Catholics for the Pope, or Mormons for a Brigham Young, the elements of future trouble exist in such dependence. Another danger lies in the fact that the Doukhobórs have been so much persecuted that a rooted distrust of Governments dwells in their minds. They admit that they have received benefits from the Canadian Government, but they suspect that this was only because the Government sees its way to make something out of them. Every proposal or

demand made by the Government is first of all considered by them with an eye to the possibility of it being the thin end of a Conscription-wedge.

This attitude is the less easy to overcome, because their fundamental religious belief that men should not harm each other, clashes with the system of executions, imprisonments, military preparations and wars, upon which all Governments, as we know them to-day, rest. And moreover, it unfortunately, but not unnaturally, happens that among the educated people who have helped the Doukhobórs (and one or two of whom have lived with them in Canada) are some who are philosophic-anarchists, not merely in the sense that they have understood that there is no moral right inherent in majorities (any more than in hereditary rulers) entitling Governments to do violence, but in the sense that they nourish an antipathy to Governments somewhat similar to that felt by rabid Protestants towards Catholics.

Such people feel the truth of what Thoreau wrote in 1849:—

"Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which

the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure."

But suffering from that sectarian spirit which confines man's vision to one side of a question, these reformers seem only able to deal with the matter in the abstract, as it concerns their inner consciousness. Of what advance they can help others to make, practically, wisely, and rightly, they seem to have no notion. Fixing their eyes on the distant mountain peak, and forgetting to consider where they start from, or what strength they possess, they often tumble straightway into the next ditch. They lose all sympathy with Thoreau when he goes on to say: "But to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government."

It is, I think, true of these advisers of the Doukhobórs, as of many idealist reformers, that their strong point is their faithfulness to an idea, and their weak point is disregard for the perplexity and distress they cause to other people.

It is not enough for such people to see through, and expose, the delusion on which the authority of the Church or the State rests, they must needs confuse people with principles, and behave like

the war-horse of a former age, who panted for the battle. They are only happy when they are exposing a Jesuit trick, or denouncing the iniquity of an official demand.

But let us try to be just even to the rabid Protestant or the rabid, though nominally philosophic, Anarchist. Great wrongs are not perpetrated without producing great reactions. Many men, not otherwise stupid, can see but one thing at a time; when they see that a thing is wrong they cannot stop to discriminate between people and principles, or to understand that it is by enlightening Papists and politicians, rather than by hating them, that progress can be made; and that, to enlighten people, much sympathy and kindly consideration of the reason of their errors is required.

I have allowed myself this final digression because I believe the tendency to ticket men, and bodies of men, by this or that collective name, and to regard the men as we believe the principles denoted by the said ticket deserve to be regarded, is one of the greatest hindrances to that progress which will be possible when people learn to think freely on all subjects, and to feel kindly towards all men.

February 1901.

Since the above was written the papers have published an "Address to all Nations," issued by the Doukhobórs, protesting against the Canadian laws concerning the regis-

tration of land, as well as of births, marriages, and deaths, and asking whether there is any country where they can live "without being obliged to break the demands of our conscience and of the Truth."

Without attaching much importance to an appeal which, I hear, was most actively promoted by one not himself a Doukhobór, we have, in this Appeal, an instance of that lack both of a sense of proportion and of consideration for others, which has been observable in many otherwise estimable sects.

With tact and patience this present difficulty may quickly blow over, but should the Canadian authorities be unwise enough to attempt coercion, they may arouse in the Doukhobórs that indomitable spirit (closely allied to obstinacy), which, when the issue was a really vital one, successfully withstood the power even of the Russian Government.

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